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Nick Carter Stories

A COMPACT WITH DAZAAR

or The Devil Worshiper's Den

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NICK CARTER STORIES

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A COMPACT WITH DAZAAR;

Or, THE DEVIL WORSHIPERS' DEN.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEVIL WORSHIPERS' TRAP.

Nick Carter came to an abrupt halt at the corner of the avenue, and frowned.

"It is the sign of the Devil Worshipers, Chick," he said to his companion, and the detective indicated by a gesture a group of chalk marks that had been inscribed on the pavement.

"So I see," replied Chick. "But it seems to be rather ambiguous, doesn't it?"

"Yes; it points two ways at once."

"Isn't it a rule with the Devil Worshipers that in making these signs to place the arrow so that it points in the direction opposite the desired point?"

"Always. I have never known them to do otherwise," replied the detective.

"But here are two arrows," said Chick, "and they point in opposite directions."

"So I see."

"What do you make of that?"

"Simply," replied Nick, "that one of them will lead to nothing."

"While the other will ultimately lead to the place of meeting?" questioned the detective's first assistant.

"Surely."

"Well, Nick, we have searched this entire city for a whole week for a clew to the hiding place of Dazaar; it would seem as if we have fallen upon one at last."

The detective shook his head.

"You are jumping too quickly at conclusions, Chick," he said.

"How so?"

"Because Dazaar would not consent to the use of these signals, knowing that I am on the track and that I am perfectly familiar with these signs."

"Unless——" began Chick, and stopped.

"Unless what, Chick?"

"Unless they were made use of for the specific purpose of attracting your attention."

"By Jove, Chick, you've hit it!"

"You think, then, Nick, that these signs are intended for a lure?"

"Undoubtedly."

"But if that is the case why is it that they are made so obscure?"

"Why, don't you see? That is part of the plan. Dazaar knows mighty well that I would scent a trap the instant my eyes lighted upon signs like these, and so she has——"

"I see. And so the signs are made as if it were intended that you should not read them, and thus are left for you to study out."

"That's the idea."

"The long and short of it is that they were placed there with the sole intention that you would see them and trace them out."

"That's about the size of it."

"Which you will not do."

"Which I *will* do, you mean."

"And walk into the trap that is prepared for you?"

"And walk—or at least appear to walk—into the trap they have set for me."

"You are determined to keep up this search for Dazaar to the end, are you?"

"Chick, I promised myself, in the form of a solemn oath, that I would not think of another thing or do another thing until I had hunted Dazaar, man, woman, or fiend, whichever the real Dazaar may be, off the face of the earth. I mean to keep that oath, and what is more, I do not mean to permit a single opportunity, however small it may

be, to escape me. I will find that woman, or that devil, or that living horror, whatever, whoever, or whichever it is, and the next time we are face to face——"

"Well?"

"Chick, Dazaar, or Nick Carter—one of them—has got to get off the earth."

"Then I see Dazaar's finish," said Chick, with a smile; but Nick's attention was again fixed upon the chalk marks on the pavement, and he appeared not to have heard the facetious remark.

"I wish my little Jap were here," remarked Nick musingly. "He would be a whole lot of help to me just now, Chick. I think with you, and Patsy, and Ten-Ichi* on the side, we could surround that outfit of Dazaar's, so to speak, and 'do' it to a finish."

For a moment Chick did not reply, while he seemed to be lost in deep thought, as if an unusual problem had suddenly occurred to him, but at the end of that time he thrust one hand into his pocket and drew forth a telegram which he gave to Nick.

"I received that this morning," he said. "It was a harmless request of his, and I resolved to humor him, but now that you have mentioned his name, I think you ought to be told."

"What do you mean? What is it?" asked Nick.

"A telegram from Ten-Ichi, sent from Buffalo, while he was passing through. He will be here in New York to-night."

"Ten-Ichi? Here to-night? Why was I not told?" demanded Nick, with a frown.

"The lad wished to surprise you. Listen, Nick. I received a letter from him, mailed only one steamer before he started for this country, from Japan. He told me in that letter that he would soon be here, but asked me as a special favor to say nothing to you about it as he wished to surprise you. This morning I received the telegram. It seemed a harmless request, and I——"

"Oh, that's all right, Chick! It would have been a surprise, in fact, it is quite as great a surprise as it is, and a most welcome one, too. He comes just in time, for I want him, and I want him mighty badly, also."

"We will doubtless find him at the house when we return for dinner," predicted Chick.

"Good! Now let's attend to these Devil Worshipers' signs."

"What shall you do about them?"

"You follow the arrow which points westward, I'll take the other one. One of them will probably lead to nothing. In either case we will both return here."

They were at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fifth Street—the very point at which, long ago, the signal of the Devil Worshipers had also appeared, and attracted the attention of the great detective.

As Nick ceased speaking, he and Chick started away in different directions, walking rapidly, and as they did so, a tall and handsome, although somewhat swarthy-faced man descended the steps of the clubhouse which is on that corner, and crossed the pavement to an automobile of the limousine type, which at that moment drew up against the curb.

The window of the limousine was lowered as he approached, and the face of a beautiful woman appeared at the aperture. At the same moment, the man raised his hat and bowed with remarkable grace.

And also at the same moment another thing occurred which nobody seemed to notice at all, but which is, nevertheless, important to the readers.

Two boys who had been tossing a ball to and fro between them, suddenly ceased to play.

The reason was that one of the boys had chanced to glance toward the steps of the clubhouse and had seen the swarthy gentleman descend the steps—and he also saw the limousine draw up at the curb, and the beautiful face appear at the window.

The boy who observed these things, suddenly lost his hold on the ball, and in such a manner that it rolled directly under the limousine, and almost to the feet of the swarthy man, who was now conversing with the lady inside it.

Instantly the boy was on his knees and had crawled underneath the limousine in pursuit of the ball, but somehow he seemed to be a long time in securing possession of it.

If you, my reader, had been under that automobile with the boy, you could have heard every word which passed between the gentleman and the lady—but you would not have understood what they were saying, nevertheless, for they conversed in a strangely foreign tongue, the like of which is rarely heard in the city of New York.

Even Nick Carter himself would not have understood, for, although he could speak, read, write, and understand perfectly seventeen languages, this particular tongue was one which he had never acquired—and the reader may guess what it was, for it was Tibetan.

Whether the boy who listened under the carriage understood the man and woman or not, he seemed strangely interested, and it could not have been the mere sound of the language he heard, either, for it was fiercely guttural.

Suddenly, however, he seemed to have heard all that he desired, for he grasped the ball, which had hitherto eluded his fingers, and escaped from his precarious position just as the big limousine started forward.

Scrambling out, he rejoined his friend, and once more the ball was skyrocketed between them.

The automobile drove away and disappeared around the corner, the swarthy man reëntered the clubhouse, and the boys were still tossing the ball when Nick Carter and his chief assistant, Chick, returned upon the scene from opposite directions.

Neither of the detectives had noticed the boys at all, and the boys did not appear to have noticed the detectives, but when, after a short lapse of time, Nick and Chick started away together, and the swarthy individual, accompanied by another man of his own complexion and general appearance, appeared on the steps of the clubhouse, and the second swarthy man started away in the direction taken by the detectives, the boys ceased their play and walked along arm in arm in that direction, also.

In the meantime, Nick Carter had said to Chick:

"You found nothing in that direction, did you?"

"No."

"Well, I did. Come with me."

"What do you intend to do?"

"I intend to find out where the Devil Worshipers are to meet and when they are to meet, after that we will return home and talk it over, but all the same, I haven't a doubt that my real intentions are to attend that meeting

*Read No. 41 of the NICK CARTER STORIES.

wherever it may happen to be, and to be present at their hideous ceremonies, even if there are ten thousand Dazaars present, and each one of them is ten thousand times more to be feared than the Dazaar we know about."

"You will find that it is a trap, Nick—a trap they have set for you."

"Then, by thunder," cried the detective, "I'll walk into their trap—and bust it!"

CHAPTER II.

A MENACE FROM EVERY SIDE.

But the signs of the Devil Worshipers did not lead the two detectives far, for presently they discovered that the signs had ceased, and that, like the other end, which Chick had followed in the beginning, they led to nothing.

"Here ends the first lesson," said Nick, coming to a pause at last. "This, I take it, is the bait."

While he spoke, he half turned so that he partly faced in the direction whence he had come, and instantly there flashed across his face a look which Chick perfectly understood, for it meant as plainly as if Nick had said the words, that they were followed, and that the detective was aware of the fact.

However, Chick made no sign; instead, he directed his reply to the remark that Nick had made.

"What do you mean by the bait?" he asked.

"Simply that they have led us this far in order to see if we will bite at all, and now that we have bitten, so to speak, and they are aware of it—for we are watched—they will presently give us more arrows to follow, and so, little by little, we will be permitted to know where this meeting is to be."

"And in the meantime?"

"Well, in the meantime, I would like to know where they happen to be hanging out at present. Did you see that figure one under the last arrow?"

"Yes."

"I suppose that means, if it means anything at all, that if we will come here one day later, we will find more arrows. I say, Chick."

"Well?"

"I don't think we'll have to bother about those arrows much."

"Why not?"

"Because it is so very much easier to follow a man, isn't it?"

"Decidedly."

"Well, they have put one on our trail. He is just back there a few steps. I wonder if he thinks that we are novices?"

"You can depend upon it that he knows we are not," replied Chick.

"By Jove, I have it!" said Nick suddenly.

"What?"

"The idea."

"What is the idea?"

"Simply this: Dazaar knows mighty well that no such chump as that fellow could trail me very far without my being onto the fact, and, therefore, he has been put on the trail simply because they intend me to tumble to him. See?"

"Sure."

"Chick, this isn't one trap they have set for you and me; there are several of them."

"I haven't a doubt of it."

"More than likely, though, they all lead to the same deadfall. Look out, there!"

"What's the matter?"

Nick Carter had no time to reply to Chick's sudden question, for he had leaped out of the way of two boys who were rushing and pushing each other down the street, and when Nick uttered the warning, they were in the very act of a collision with both of the detectives.

Nick succeeded in dodging them, but Chick was not so fortunate.

Both boys struck him squarely amidships, and he rolled over upon the pavement between them in a manner that was most undignified.

Chickering Carter's temper was not always proof against occasions of that kind, and he came near to losing it then. As it was, he seized the boy who was nearest him, and whose face he had not seen at all, and was on the point of boxing his ears, when he was surprised to hear the boy utter his own name in a rapid undertone.

"Dont' hit me, Chick," he said. "I'm Ten-Ichi. Just arrived. The other lad is with me. I knocked you down purposely. Give me a kick and send me about my business. I'll keep tabs on the chap who is following you and the chief. Just go home and wait for me there. I've got a lot to tell the chief about Dazaar. That is what I've come back here, all the way from Japan, to do. At least, that is one of the reasons."

In the meantime, Nick Carter had stepped forward, for his quick eyes perceived that the boy was talking to Chick, and he saw in the circumstance something that was not altogether accidental.

The instant his eyes rested upon Ten-Ichi, notwithstanding the disguise of the ingenious Jap, he recognized him, but not by a word or a sign did he evidence the fact that he knew the lad.

"Out of this!" Chick cried, seizing Ten-Ichi by the collar and dragging him to his feet.

Then, with a twist of his arm he sent the son of the mikado whirling across the street.

A hundred feet back along the street, the swarthy man had been an interested spectator of this scene, and he regarded it with a smile which was as enigmatical as his whole bearing.

He was still smiling when Nick and Chick passed him as they retraced their steps, and, when the detectives had traversed some distance so that they knew they were out of hearing, Nick remarked:

"What did you make of that smile, Chick?"

"Rather fetching, wasn't it?" replied the assistant.

"Rather complacent and self-satisfied, I thought," said the detective. "If it meant anything at all, it meant that he did not regard that rough-and-tumble scene as altogether an accident."

"Those Oriental smiles are difficult to fathom, Nick."

"Rather. What did Ten-Ichi have to tell you?"

Chick repeated, word for word, all that Ten-Ichi had said to him while they were struggling on the pavement together.

"Do you know, Chick," said Nick, at the conclusion, "I have always had an idea that Ten-Ichi would reappear in just this way. The rascal! He wanted to surprise me, did he? Well, if the fact will afford him any satisfaction, you may tell him, when you get the opportunity, that

he succeeded. When did that telegram come from Buffalo?"

"This morning."

"Then you can depend upon it that Ten-Ichi left it there to be forwarded two or three days after he had passed through the place. He has been in New York more than an hour or two. Stop and tie your shoe, Chick, and see if that swarthy chap is following us. I won't turn around."

"Yes; he is on the trail."

"All right. We'll take him home with us and see how long he'll stay there. We'll let Ten-Ichi tell us what becomes of him; eh?"

"That is not only the easier, but it is the better way, I think."

"Sure."

They strode on in silence together for some distance after that, and were in the act of turning a corner into Madison Avenue when Nick Carter again broke the silence.

"Look straight ahead of you, Chick, and tell me what you see," he said.

"Another one of those swarthy fellows. What are they? Hindus, Tibetans, or what?"

"Tibetans, I reckon. Now look across the avenue, directly opposite him. What do you see there?"

"Another one of them, by Jove!"

"Exactly. Now cast your eyes over my shoulders to a point directly opposite me."

"Still another."

"Correct. Now, I have noticed that they have rather a peculiar gait, as if they had passed most of their lives on horseback and the rest of it climbing mountains. Look 'way ahead of the fellow in front of us and tell me what you see."

Chick did as he was told to do, and studied carefully the view ahead of him.

"I see four more of them," he said presently. "Two on this side of the avenue, and two more on the opposite side. They are almost opposite each other."

"Correct again. Now, let's count up. Counting the one who is following us, that makes eight of them in plain sight at this moment, if we should look around behind us, doesn't it, old man?"

"It does, for sure. And if the number in front is any criterion of the number behind, there should be fourteen of them, all told; eh?"

"Quite a respectable showing; eh, Chick?"

"What the devil does it mean?"

"Search me! Perhaps they intend to frighten us by a mere exhibition of numbers."

"Maybe, but I doubt that."

"So do I, as a matter of fact. Anyhow, they are in evidence."

"Can you guess what it all means, Nick?"

"Nay, nay; I'm no Dazaar to read the stars—or these Tibetans, either. But if it means anything at all, it means that they propose to carry the war into Africa."

"How so?"

"Well, this way: I wouldn't wonder if every Devil Worshiper within reach of post or telegraph has been summoned here—perhaps by our gentle enemy, Dazaar. I should say, from the appearance of things, that the city is filled with Devil Worshipers, and if we reason—as we must do—that there are just as many or more behind us, at the right of us and at the left of us as there are in front of us, why we are surrounded by quite a number of them.

"Of course, I am speaking metaphorically. They are not exactly to the right of us and the left of us and before and behind us, like the cannon in the charge of the Six Hundred, but it amounts to that. I shouldn't wonder, Chick, if Dazaar has taken an oath something like my own."

"It looks like it."

"It does for a fact. She doesn't propose to let me have oath making all to myself, and so she has said that she will just drop other things until she gets Mr. Nicholas Carter out of the way for good and all. I hope she has."

"Why?"

"Well, it will be more exciting. Do you know what I am thinking, Chick?"

"No. Tell me."

"I am thinking that this city is full of Devil Worshipers—perhaps a thousand or more of them, and every one a shrewd, wily, cruel, crafty, relentless foe, and every one of them sworn to the death to thrust me and all my friends and belongings off the earth forever!"

CHAPTER III.

THE SILENT AND TERRIBLE TOUCH OF DAZAAR.

The two men strode on in silence after that, for the conclusion arrived at by the detective had given them both food for thought.

Both could understand that there was reason for it moreover.

An entire week had passed since Nick Carter had rescued Cora Tempest from the clutches of Irma Plavatski,* and during that time both he and Chick, assisted by Patsy, had scoured the city from the Harlem River to the Battery, but never once had any of them discovered a sign of Dazaar or her followers.

She seemed to have disappeared utterly, and Nick Carter, pressed as he was by the demands upon him would long ago have decided in his own mind that she had fled from the city, and so had gone out of his life forever, and thus would have abandoned the search, had it not been for the promise he had made to himself that he would devote himself utterly and entirely to the task of hunting Irma Plavatski, otherwise Dazaar, down, and that he would not abandon the pursuit of her until he knew of his own knowledge that she was beyond the power of committing further wrong or doing further harm.

During the week, as has already been said, there was never once a sign of the presence of Dazaar or any of her followers, and now, as if they had dropped out of the sky, the city seemed suddenly to be filled with them.

Until the moment Nick discovered the chalked figures on the pavement at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fifth Street, nothing had been seen or heard of Dazaar, or of a Tibetan; within an hour after that discovery was made, lo! there were Tibetans to the right of them, to the left of them, before and behind them, and by the same token there were doubtless many others around them who remained unseen through it all.

And Nick Carter, and Chick as well, saw menace in every one of them.

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*See NICK CARTER STORIES, No. 72.

It was plain to the detective that they were not all in the city at once, for nothing.

It was plain to him that Dazaar, determined now to have revenge upon Nick Carter, and either to conquer him or kill him, had summoned all the followers who could be reached to her aid, and that henceforth, not only Nick Carter himself, but Chick, and Patsy, Cora Tempest, and, in fact, every friend and associate of the great detective, would live in daily and hourly peril of their lives and their happiness.

That was the problem which confronted the detective as he strode along beside Chick.

If the menace were against himself alone, he would have been less concerned about it, but he knew only too well that it was against every person who called him friend.

For he knew that such was the established method by which Dazaar proceeded.

Dazaar delighted to strike those subtle blows which produce mental agony without inflicting physical pain.

To kill a man is of itself a small thing. But to kill his friends one by one, and to make him feel that it is because they are his friends that they lose their lives, or their fortunes, or their happiness—that is another and a terrible thing.

And, while the detective knew that the sword was hanging in the air above him—while he knew that he and those he loved were menaced on every side, he also realized that he was utterly powerless to prevent the blow from falling—unless he could see it when it was about to fall, and stay it before it reached its mark.

He could not point out this or that man as inimical to his life, simply because that man happened to be of swarthy complexion, and a Tibetan.

A thousand of them might pass before his door every day, and show their gleaming teeth in as many enigmatical and threatening smiles; Nick could do nothing to stop all that. A man may not be thrust into prison for a smile.

"We're up against it, Chick," he said, "hard! The question is, where will they strike the first blow?"

"God knows!" replied Chick.

"Aye, and so do I! At least, I think I do," said Nick.

"Where, then?"

"Cora Tempest. Dazaar hates her almost as madly as she hates me."

"But——"

"It will be Cora first, it may be you next."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Chick.

"No, old fellow, it is not nonsense! There are none so safe from real bodily harm in this dilemma as I am. It is Dazaar's method to make me suffer through my friends—and you are one of them."

"Well, I shall not run away from her, for all that."

"You wouldn't know how to run away from anybody or anything, Chick. But I must find a method to guard Cora."

"Perhaps she will consent to let me sleep at her house for a night or two," suggested Chick.

Again they lapsed into silence, and so turned the corner into the street where Nick Carter had his residence, and they had proceeded only a short distance along it toward the house when, at the same instant, they discovered Cora Tempest's maid approaching them rapidly, and as if she was in unusual haste.

"Where away now, Martha?" asked Nick, as they came within speaking distance.

"Ah, sir, it is you. Thank Heaven, I met you! I am going after Miss Tempest, sir."

"Indeed! Where is she?" asked Nick, surprised at the girl's manner.

"I do not know, sir; I cannot tell," replied Martha, twisting her handkerchief nervously in her hands. "I—it is all very strange, sir."

"What is strange, girl? Tell me at once."

"Miss Tempest. You see, about an hour ago there was a strange gentleman came to the house; a dark, handsome sort of a man he was, and when I had taken him into the parlor, he handed me his card, which had a name on it that I could not pronounce. I started to take it to Miss Tempest, who was in the library, and when I gave it to her, she said she had no idea who the man could be, and told me to say that she was not at home and to show him out again."

"Well?" said Nick impatiently. "Go on."

"I turned to do her bidding, sir, and I nearly screamed outright when I saw the dark man standing in the library door. He was looking straight past me, over my shoulder, and his two eyes were glowing like coals of fire."

Nick growled out something that was unintelligible between his teeth, and Martha continued:

"He was smiling, sir, and showing his white and gleaming teeth with his upper lip drawn back the same way a dog does it when he means mischief, but all the time his air was that deferential that I didn't know what to do, and I stood there like a fool, looking at him for almost half a minute before it occurred to me to turn to Miss Tempest again."

"Go on," commanded Nick, as she hesitated for breath.

"Well, sir, when I did turn around, Miss Cora was smiling back at him as if she had known the human serpent all her life, and as if she was as glad to see him as could be; but, all the same, I know now that there was something strange in her smile and in the expression of her face, although I did not realize it at the time.

"'You seem to have forgotten my name, Miss Tempest,' the man was saying, in a low tone that reminded me of the purring of a cat, 'but I hope you have not forgotten me as well. May I come in?'

"'Certainly,' she replied; but she never looked at me at all; only at him.

"Well, sir, I didn't know what to do, and there was really only one thing for me to do, which was to leave the room, so I went out, but I left the door open behind me, and I stayed in the parlor, waiting for him to go.

"Then, after a minute, I heard him, or her, I don't know which, close the door, then, after another little while, it opened again, and the man came out, and Miss Cora followed him. She passed by him in the hall, and walked straight to the front door and opened it. She had on her hat, for she had had that in the library with her.

"That's all, sir. The long and short of it is that she passed by me without a word and went out of the house, followed by that snaky man, and I haven't seen her since; and I sat there and waited for her return till I got so tired and nervous that I could wait no longer, so I started out to find her myself."

"How long ago do you say that all this happened, Martha?" asked Nick.

"About an hour, sir, as near as I can judge. I don't

think the man was there more than ten minutes before they went out together. You don't suppose, do you, sir, that the man made her go out against her will? I just can't understand it at all, sir."

"Don't try to do so, Martha. Return to the house and wait there till your mistress returns. That is the only thing for you to do."

The girl turned and retraced her steps, and the two detectives continued on their way.

"The other side has fired the first gun," said Nick.

"So it seems," replied Chick. "But tell me what you make of this."

"Simply the fact that Dazaar has sent one of her expert hypnotists to capture Cora Tempest, and he has succeeded."

Nick stopped suddenly in the middle of the sidewalk, and, with his lips tightened across his teeth, he asked:

"Chick, did you ever have somebody at the other end of a telephone sass you?"

"You bet!"

"That's the way I feel now, but, old fellow, I'm going to run down that wire, so to speak, and I'm going to catch the fellow who is sassing me at the other end of it."

Five minutes later they arrived at the house, and even as Nick was ascending the steps to the front door, he felt that he was to find other evidence of the work of Dazaar as soon as he entered the house.

But he could not conjecture what he was to find, and he was in no way prepared for what was awaiting him, and he started back in amazement when he opened the door and entered.

Directly in front of him, and tied to the post of the balustrade was the naked and headless body of a man whose stiffened arms had been stretched out in a horizontal position, as if in supplication.

And around him, on the floor, there was not a drop of blood, nor was the clothing that had been taken from him anywhere discoverable.

And still, stranger than all, the house itself was as silent as a tomb, as if to suggest that the several servants, as well as Patsy, might have met with the same gruesome fate that had overtaken this headless victim of Dazaar.

CHAPTER IV.

A MESSAGE BROUGHT BY A CORPSE.

"Close the door, Chick," was Nick Carter's first order, and without another word he stepped forward close to the body, for the first thought that came to him was that it might be Patsy.

A second glance, however, convinced him that the body belonged to a stranger, and an examination of the hands and feet presently satisfied him that the man had been of middle age and that he was a foreigner and a laborer.

But the head was missing, and there was not a stitch of clothing anywhere to be found, nor was there a drop of blood in evidence, showing that the victim had been already dead for a considerable time when he was brought to the house.

Convinced as to these minor points, the detective and his assistant made a hasty but thorough examination of the house itself; and here again they were destined to meet with a surprise.

The house was deserted.

The big nurse, who Nick kept steadily in his employ, the four servants, and Patsy, who had been requested to remain at home until the return of his chief, had all disappeared—and they had left no sign of their going.

Not even a wad of paper had been thrown in a corner by Patsy for Nick to find.

There was nothing, save the dead and headless body in the hall and the utter absence of the servants, who should have been on hand and at their posts, to tell that strangers had entered the premises.

Nothing, apparently, had been disturbed.

Everything was in order.

Indeed, it appeared as if, with one accord, Patsy, the nurse, and the four servants had gone out of the house together.

But for the headless body of the man in the hall, Nick might have regarded the absence of all his retainers almost as a coincidence—and yet, he knew well that nothing save force could have taken Patsy from his duty, or have induced him to disobey or transcend his orders.

"Chick," he said to his assistant, as soon as the search through the house was completed, "now that the ball is opened, it looks as if Dazaar intended to dance to fast music, doesn't it?"

"It does that."

"Suppose you step outside and tell me how many of those chaps we saw in the street are still in sight. While you are gone I will take another look at this corpse."

Chick obeyed, presently returning with the assurance that there was not now one of them in sight.

"Good!" said Nick. "They have withdrawn for the moment. Now let's have a look at this dead one and see if we can determine who he might have been."

The library table was cleared and a sheet placed over it. Next the corpse was taken down from its station against the post of the balustrade, and laid upon the sheet.

Then, silently, without a word to each other, the detectives began their examinations, and for ten minutes or more neither of them addressed the other, but at the end of that time, as if with one impulse, they each raised their heads and looked into each other's eyes.

"Well," said Nick, "what do you make of it all, Chick?"

"He was a foreigner, I should say—probably an Italian, although not a very dark one—and a laboring man, about forty years old, or more."

"Good, Chick! But let me hear how you arrive at those conclusions."

"There is a mark against his chest which shows where he has worn a St. Joseph over his heart, and leading from that and upon so much of the neck as is left for us to see, is the mark of the cord to which it was suspended. That cord was made of hair——"

"Splendid, Chick; I'm proud of you. Go on."

"It is easy to tell that the cord was made of hair by the character of the irritation it originally made against the skin, and which, although the charm was worn many years, has left its mark here. A cord would not have done that, for a cord would have worn out, or rotted, and therefore would have been changed many times during the years the amulet was worn. So in that case the mark would not have been present at all. It is a favorite custom among Savoyard Italians to have those cords braided from their mother's hair, or the hair of a sweetheart or wife. Hence this man was a Savoyard Italian."

"Good again; and anybody might see that he was a laboring man, from the condition of his hands and feet,

and body generally. But how do you make him out to be forty years old, or more?"

"Also by his hands and feet, and by the lines upon them, as well as by the marks of the hair cord against his chest."

"But his hands and feet give us better proof of his age. He was forty-six, I should say."

"Yes; that is my idea."

"Have you any idea how he met his death, Chick?"

"No, there is no wound upon his body! hence I conclude that he might have been shot in the head, struck with a bludgeon, or——"

"No, Chick; you are away off. Haven't you discovered that there is almost no blood left in the body?"

"True; but I had not noticed it."

"See how transparent the skin is, even though the man has been dead a long time, and you can notice, too, where the flesh has sunk in over the larger arteries. The man was killed by the act of beheading him."

"Eh? Do you mean that he was not wounded at all until the knife which severed his head from his body was used?"

"Yes, that is what I do mean. He was not shot, nor hit with a bludgeon, nor was his throat cut till after he was rendered unconscious."

"But how can you tell that?"

"Easily enough. Notice his fingers and toes."

"Well?"

"If the man had been rendered unconscious by a blow, or by any sudden effect, the fingers and toes would have shown it. The nervous shock would have been communicated to the extremities, and the evidence of it would have remained in the shape of a contraction of the muscles; however slight it might have been it would still have been there."

"I see."

"Now there is not the slightest evidence of such a thing in this case; and——"

"Well?"

"We have already seen how our enemies have enticed one victim into their power."

"You refer to Miss Tempest?"

"Yes; they simply send a hypnotist to subdue her, and they lead her away, apparently a willing captive."

"Great Heaven, Nick! Do you suppose——"

"Hush, Chick! We must not suppose anything; we must know. I am using every effort at self-control and patience that I possess to be not too hasty in beginning my search for Cora Tempest. I can only hope that her enemies and mine have not first mesmerized and then beheaded her, as they did with this man here."

"You think, then, that he was hypnotized before he was killed?"

"I am sure of it."

"But why was he killed at all? Simply to frighten you, by bringing him here, do you suppose?"

"Oh, no. Dazaar would not go to all that trouble—especially in the use of a body that is strange to me. They happened to have this corpse on hand, and wished to rid themselves of it. They were coming here, or they decided to do so at that time, and it occurred to them that to leave it here would serve two purposes: One, it would rid them of the cumbersome corpse; and the other, it would serve as a notice to me of what I might expect to find awaiting me later on."

"Did you ever hear of such unconscionable fiends, Nick?" asked Chick.

"For," continued Nick, unheeding the question, "they have only just begun their play. Inside of an hour Dazaar has made us feel, quite forcibly, that the strife has commenced. Cora has been led away from her home; Patsy and five of my retainers are captives in the hands of Dazaar, and we have discovered this dead man awaiting us inside my own house, and in the light of day. Surely that is warning enough that we are pitted against no common foe."

"Surely it should be, Nick."

"And now, do you realize that Dazaar has in her power no less than seven persons—Cora, Patsy, the nurse, and the four servants—upon whose bodies she can play, just as the Bulgarian bandit plays upon the fingers and toes and ears of his captives when he sends them as a warning of what may happen next to the parties from whom he has demanded the prisoner's ransom?"

"Yes, I realize it—fully."

"It is just that sort of a warning which was intended to be conveyed when they placed the body of this Savoyard against the post of the balustrade in my hallway.

"It was as if that fiend Dazaar had said to me in so many words:

"'I send you this as an earnest of what I intend to do. This is the body of a stranger, and it is equivalent to sending you the smallest toe of one of your friends for whose liberty I have demanded a ransom. Presently I will send you the body of your meanest servant dead and headless, also, but marked so that you will have no difficulty in recognizing it; later, I will regale you with the body of another servant, and then another, and so on till my supply has become exhausted.

"'But when that is so—when I have no more servants to send you, I will still have Patsy——'"

"Great Heaven, Nick!"

"'And after Patsy, I have Cora Tempest, and in the meantime I will have others, and still others and others, so that you shall be surfeited with the corpses supplied to you.'

"Bah, Chick! Can you not understand it all? Can you not see the way in which the plans of Dazaar are intended to work out? Can you not understand that this is no common game we have entered upon now, but that it is a war of extermination on both sides?

"Dazaar will lose no more time in dealing with tortures upon the bodies of her victims, for I am the only victim now, and the tortures will be directed solely against me and through the murder of those I love.

"I doubt, Chick, if she would take the trouble to capture me, in person, if she could do so, for she wants me at liberty, in order to make me suffer. But, Chick, do you beware! for as sure as there is a God above us, Dazaar will attack you next."

CHAPTER V.

A TERRIBLE THREAT.

The two detectives were interrupted at that moment by the ringing of the front-door bell, and leaving Chick with the body of the dead man, Nick stepped into the hall, closed the door behind him, and himself answered the ring.

A man of the nondescript pattern stood upon the threshold.

He was just such a person as one may see any day, seated upon the benches of Union, Madison, or Washington Square, with a muddy half of a morning paper held in his nerveless hands, his hat pulled down over his eyes, and with evidently no occupation in life, save that of existing through the intervals between nickels, which means to him beer and free lunches.

A shabby, unkempt, shadowy figure of what once might have been a man—a veritable Bedouin of the parks, and he stood, sleepy-eyed and listless upon the doorstep until Nick had thrown the door wide ajar, when, without a word, and without seeming to see the detective before him, he started forward through the open door, and so entered the house.

In the meantime, Nick observed him critically, and the instant the man was through the door he closed it and then seized the visitor by the arm and led him slowly back through the hall toward the door of the room wherein he had left Chick in company with the corpse.

Nor did he address the newcomer by a word; nor did the visitor speak.

The circumstance seemed a strange one indeed, and totally inexplicable, although Nick Carter seemed to have understood the condition of things from the instant he saw the stranger upon the doorstep.

When he opened the door, Chick started forward, but Nick raised one hand to indicate that he desired silence.

Then he led the man inside the room, past the table upon which the corpse was stretched, turning him so that he could not help seeing the headless body if there were any sight in the depth of his staring eyes.

But there was no sight there.

The man looked without seeing. He passed the corpse without discovering it. He moved mechanically, as if he were propelled by some volition that was not his own, and he had neither eyes nor ears for anything that was near him.

"What does it mean?" exclaimed Chick, startled in spite of himself.

"A messenger from Dazaar," replied Nick laconically. And then, after a moment of silence, he added:

"Could you not see at a glance that this poor fellow is under the influence of one of those strange spells of hypnotic influence of which Dazaar and her followers are so thoroughly masters?"

"Yes; I see it now."

"This man has no idea where he is. If he should awaken now, he would be astonished beyond measure not to find himself seated upon one of the park benches, where, without doubt, they discovered him and adapted him to their uses.

"He will not speak until he is spoken to. He would stand there just as he is for hours—perhaps for days, if his strength should hold out, and when he finally awakens he will have no recollection of anything that has happened while he was in this state. It is a type of hypnotic power of which I know nothing, but I do know that it exists, and here we have a genuine evidence of it."

"But, Nick, why is the fellow here?"

"He is here because he was sent here."

"But why?"

"Don't you remember Dazaar's fondness for sending messages?"

"Certainly."

"Formerly she used to write them. In the beginning, there was scarcely a day when the human fiend did not regale me with written threats—boasting letters, warning me what I might next expect in the way of vengeance, but she has abandoned that habit."

"So it would seem."

"And now she sends her messages by corpses, living and dead, for this fellow is no better now than a living corpse. He should be thankful that he was not selected for the first message she chose to send—the one brought by that headless fellow yonder—the silent message which means so much, and which I so readily understand.

"And now, Chick, we will find out what this messenger has to say, for he will repeat what he has been ordered to say—no more and no less."

Nick turned then to the shabby messenger, and fixing his eyes upon him, said, in a low and even tone:

"Who are you?"

"I am the messenger of Dazaar," replied the man, in a hollow monotone which was utterly expressionless.

"What is your own name?"

"I have forgotten it."

"Whence do you come?"

"From Dazaar."

"And you have a message to deliver?"

"Yes."

"To whom?"

"To Nick Carter."

"I am Nick Carter. What is your message?"

"Dazaar has sent you the headless body of an Italian whom he beheaded while the man was still alive and in the hypnotic state."

"Yes."

"Dazaar has now in captivity your young assistant, Patsy Garvan."

"That is, I suppose, also true."

"Dazaar also holds as prisoners four of your servants and a woman who was a nurse in your establishment."

"Well, go on. What more?"

"Also, Dazaar has enticed away from her home a woman of whom you are very fond—a Miss Cora Tempest."

"Proceed; must I question you all through in order to receive the message? Proceed."

"Dazaar intends to send to you, one by one, the headless trunks of all these people I have named. Afterward, their heads will be cured and mummified, and sent to decorate the halls of the friends of Dazaar, in Tibet. But first these bodies will be sent to you."

"Well? And what then?"

"They will come to you one by one. The servants will come first—four of them, then the nurse, next, your assistant, Patsy, after that, if it is possible to capture him, and there can be no doubt of that, your assistant, Chick Carter.

"And after Chick," proceeded the messenger, "Cora Tempest."

"And how am I to expect these presents from Dazaar?" asked Nick. "Am I to be regaled with her souvenirs of esteem every day?"

The messenger shook his head, but he did not offer to go, and Nick rightly conjectured that his message was not yet entirely delivered.

"You have more to say to me?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Say it, and begone."

"Dazaar will compromise with you."

"Indeed. That is news. What is the compromise she proposes?"

"That you become a member of the society of Devil Worshipers, and so subvert yourself to the will of Dazaar."

"And how am I to do that?"

"If you consent to do it, you have only to make it known to Dazaar by tracing the shape of a heart, in chalk, upon the pavement at the corner where you first discovered the sign of the Devil Worshipers to-day."

"And if I do that?"

"Dazaar will communicate with you again for further instruction."

"And if I consent to do all that, will the murder of my friends and servants be stopped?"

"At once."

"And will Patsy and Chick be spared?"

"To a certainty."

"And Cora Tempest?"

"Yes."

"Forever?"

"Yes."

"I will think it over. Can you carry a message back from me to Dazaar?"

"No."

"Then how am I to answer the message?"

"By tracing the shape of a heart upon the pavement, as directed, or by leaving the pavement bare. There is no other way."

"And when, if at all, must this tracing of a heart be made upon the pavement?"

"Before nightfall to-morrow."

"About twenty-five hours, then."

"Before nightfall to-morrow."

"Have you delivered all your message now?"

"Yes, all of it, save to say that you had best hear to the wishes of Dazaar. You have only to join the Devil Worshipers, acknowledge Dazaar as your chief and master, and swear to abide by the rule of Dazaar for one year, after that you will be free again—as free as now."

"I will think of it. Have you finished?"

"Yes."

"Then I will take you to the door and you may return whence you came."

"But," interposed Chick, "should he not be followed?"

"To what purpose?" replied Nick. "This man will only return to his bench in the park, where presently he will awaken and wonder why he has slept so long. He will have no recollection of anything that has happened while he has slept."

Then he took the messenger's arm, led him to the door, put him outside, and closed the door against him.

And then he returned to the room where he had left Chick.

CHAPTER VI.

"I SHALL TRACE THE HEART UPON THE PAVEMENT."

"Chick," said the detective, "lock this door and then come with me to the study. I have orders for you;" and then, five minutes later, when they were in the sanctum of the great detective, Nick delivered his orders.

"Chick," he said, "it has been my habit of late to discuss with you every step I have taken in all of my cases, but for the present I intend to make a change."

"How is that, Nick? What do you mean?"

"I mean that for the balance of the time while Dazaar is on earth, I shall have no further discussions. I will give you your orders how I expect you to act, and I shall expect you to obey them implicitly, and without question. From having been my associate and confidant for a long time, you are to descend the scale to the position of an abject assistant again. The time has come when I must act alone."

"Have I ever refused to obey you?"

"No, but I have grown into the habit of reasoning with you. For the present that must cease. If I am to save the lives for which I am held responsible by the force of circumstances, I must work as I was taught to work by my father—entirely upon my own resources."

"Very well, chief, I am ready for orders."

"Good! First, you will go to your own den and make yourself up to represent me in my natural person. Give yourself the best make-up you ever consummated. We must be as alike as two peas in a pod."

"I can do that all right."

"I know you can. Next, you will go to police headquarters and deliver the keys of this house to Inspector Norton. You will tell him about the headless corpse, and you will ask him, after he has had it removed, to place a guard inside the house which will never leave it until I order them withdrawn. After that is done, you will go to the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fifth Street, and with a piece of chalk you will draw a heart upon the pavement, where we saw the sign of the Devil Worshipers."

"But, Nick——"

"Stop where you are! No argument. I am giving orders now."

"Very well, sir."

"After you have done that, you will go to the Waldorf, and you will loiter around the billiard room there until you hear from me, or see me, when I will have further instructions for you."

"All right."

"One thing more."

"Well?"

"If, after you have traced the heart on the pavement, you should be approached and receive any communication of any kind from Dazaar, or from one of the agents of Dazaar, you will receive it exactly as if you were really Nick Carter, and you will acquiesce in everything that is demanded of you."

"Very good, sir."

"And later, when you see me, you will communicate to me every word and sign of that message, whatever it may be. Let there be no mistake about that."

"There shall be none."

"And one thing more."

"Yes."

"If you should chance upon Ten-Ichi, no matter what his own ideas may be or what his engagements are, tell him if he loves me and would serve me, to remain with you until I see him. I want Ten-Ichi."

As if in reply to the detective's statement, there came a gentle tap at that instant upon the study door, and leaping toward it, Nick threw it open like a flash.

"Ten-Ichi!" he exclaimed. "How did you get into the house?"

"With the key that I carried away with me to Japan, and brought back with me," replied the mikado's son, entering, and grasping the hand of the man he loved so well.

After the greetings were over, Nick turned again to Chick.

"Go, Chick," he said, "upon the duties I have given you. Carry out my orders to the letter; only be careful to make yourself so like me that the shrewdest emissaries of Dazaar cannot detect the difference."

Then he turned to Ten-Ichi.

"Now, lad," he said, "we have no time for sentimentalities. You have something to tell me?"

"Yes."

"Then let me hear what it is, and in as few words as possible."

"Very well. You know that once, long ago, in Japan, when I was a mere lad, I joined the Devil Worshipers."*

"Yes; I know. Go on."

"Because of the things I had learned in that way I was enabled to serve you once, when this Dazaar first appeared on the scene in this country, and when I happened to be here, learning from you the profession of detective."†

"Yes; of course I remember it all, very well."

"It was something more than a year ago when we believed that Dazaar was really dead, and that we had buried the fiend in a tomb in one of your cemeteries."

"True."

"I never, in my heart, credited the belief that Dazaar was really dead. I did believe that Irma Plavatski, in whose form Dazaar had appeared among us, was dead, but I nevertheless believed that Dazaar had already arranged some method of return to life by means of some one of the numberless secrets of their craft."

"Well, Ten-Ichi? You have told me nothing as yet, and I am very impatient to-day."

"I must indulge in this preamble in order to tell what I have to impart."

"Very well, take your own method."

"After you left Japan there was little for me to do in my father's palace. He would not permit me to go to the war, he would hardly allow me out of his sight, and I began to think about you and the pleasant times I had enjoyed here, and in thinking of all that, I remembered Dazaar and the Devil Worshipers."

"And in thinking of me and of the Devil Worshipers, it occurred to you that if you should resume your acquaintance with the fiendish set you might hear of something to my advantage, or at least discover if Dazaar were really dead; is that the idea?"

"Exactly the idea. I renewed my acquaintance with them, for they are numerous in Japan, and became again a member of one of their cliques."

"Well?"

"And so I learned long ago that not only did Dazaar intend to return to life again, but that the incarnated devil would also return in the form of Irma Plavatski; but do you know why?"

"Why Dazaar wished to live again?"

"No, why Dazaar wished to remain Irma Plavatski?"

"Why?"

"Because as Irma Plavatski, she learned to love you! Because she swore to herself, even at the time she was making her confession to you before she died, that the day should come when you would belong to her, body and soul! Because all the devil, all the wickedness, all the craftiness, all the hate and longing that is in her is bound up in her desire for you!"

"Bosh!"

"It is not bosh! It is true!"

"Well; go on."

"I discovered all these things through the Devil Worshipers of Japan, and I found out, also, the time when she intended to reappear. That is why I am here."

"Well, you have still more to tell, haven't you?"

"Certainly. I secured my father's consent that I should return here and serve you, and knowing about what time Dazaar intended to reappear, I arranged to be here at that time. I nearly failed in my effort to do so, but I am here. Wait, chief, I have not quite done."

"Go ahead."

"Dazaar—or Irma—arranged with her friends, through Buck Granger, so that her tomb would be constructed according to her directions. Then shortly after she was placed in it—that same night, in fact—the freshly laid cement was loosened and she was taken from the tomb, while it was resealed so cleverly as to defy detection that it had been molested at all.

"What Dazaar did after that, during the year that intervened before she reappeared on the scene, I do not know, but I have an idea that she returned to Tibet to make her peace with the powers there; at all events she is here now and prepared to win you to her will."

"Which, of course, she can never do."

"Nevertheless, beware of her, for she is powerful. Will you believe me when I tell you the number of her followers at this moment in this city, each one sworn to do her will to the death?"

"I will believe whatever you tell me is true, Ten-Ichi," replied Nick.

"There are more than six hundred of them here. They have gathered from all parts of the earth. They have come from the North, from the South, from the East, and from the West. There are men of almost every nationality among them, and they are sworn for their lives to do her bidding in this subjugation of the great detective, Nick Carter."

"But why all this, Ten-Ichi? There must be something more than the mere passion of a fiendish woman."

"There is something more, indeed."

"What is it?"

"When Dazaar long ago forsook manhood, and chose to become a woman, he lost caste among the high priests and lamas of Tibet. She, as Irma Plavatski, can only regain that prestige she has lost by the winning of you."

"Ah! Now I understand why——"

"Go on, but no, you need not, for I know what you would say. You know now why she has offered you a compromise."

"Yes, that is it."

"And has sent you word that if you will consent to join the Devil Worshipers and to give yourself body and soul to them, which means to her, for one year, she will

*Read NICK CARTER STORIES, No. 47.
†Read NICK CARTER STORIES, Nos. 41, 42, 46.

permit the prisoners she has taken to go free, she will destroy no more lives, and she will, after that year, leave you to your own desires."

"All that is as you say, Ten-Ichi, but how do you know it all?"

"I haven't been in the city almost a week for nothing. I have been on the alert. I have spied upon them as I could not have done had they suspected that I was here, and they would not only have suspected it but have known it had I dared to come directly to you.

"To-day when you and Chick read the signs on the pavement, you guessed correctly when you decided that they were there simply as an enticement for you. I was near at hand at that moment, and when you walked away in one direction and Chick in the other, Dazaar herself drove up in an automobile to the very spot where you had been standing, and was met there by one of her princely followers, who came out of the club.

"I crept under the automobile and listened to them, and by doing so I learned of what had even then taken place—at least, it was too late to stop it. I refer to the abduction of the young lady from the house opposite, as well as what has happened here in this house—that is, all save the dead body of the Italian; that was not mentioned.

"Later I followed the man who followed you, as you know, for you recognized me when I purposely collided with Chick, so that I could warn him.

"There, sir, with one addition, is all the story I have to tell."

"And what is the addition, Ten-Ichi?"

"This: A messenger was to come to you offering a compromise. You may already have seen him. You were to trace a heart on the pavement——"

"Yes, I know about that, and I have decided upon my answer."

"I am glad of that. What is it to be?"

"I shall trace the heart upon the pavement. I shall appear to accept the compromise. I shall join the Devil Worshipers and take their initiation to the end, but before it is over and through with, I will have done that which will save the lives of my friends, which will save my self-respect, and which will put Dazaar forever beyond the power of doing further harm. Come what may, I am resolved on this!"

CHAPTER VII.

A HARD PROPOSITION TO DOWN.

Ten-Ichi regarded his chief with undisguised admiration.

"Bravo!" he said; and then, rising and taking two or three turns across the room and back again, he presently stopped in front of the detective, and said slowly:

"It is the only way in which you can win the fight, which is now to the death, between you and Dazaar."

"I have come to that determination this evening," replied Nick.

"But I know it is the only way."

"You have a definite reason for being so positive?"

"Certainly I have."

"Well—what is it?"

"I should have advised this course—if you would have permitted me to advise—had you not already adopted it, as it is, my task becomes easier."

"Time flies, Ten-Ichi. Let us get done with what we have to say."

"You will trace the heart upon the pavement some time to-night, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"Then the initiation will be arranged for to-morrow night. You have been in a Devil Worshiper's den before and you know how it appears."

"Yes, I think I have some recollection of the time," said Nick grimly.

"This one will be a thousandfold worse than that, and you and I will be alone there, for the watch around the vicinity will be kept so shrewdly and carefully that there will be no chance of our smuggling help of any kind near the place."

"These are all the help I shall ask for," replied Nick, holding out his mighty arms and shutting his jaws together with a determined snap.

"You will need them and all the strength there is in them," said Ten-Ichi, "before the night of to-morrow is past, and still, there may be help at hand of which you do not know, at present."

"Then tell me what it is, I need to know all that it is possible to know before I thrust myself into the lion's jaws."

"It is only this, chief: There are many Devil Worshipers who have joined the order within the last year—in Japan."

"Well, what of that?"

"The sudden growth of the order there has been due to my efforts."

"Ah! I think I understand."

"I have many faithful followers over there, chief. There are thousands who would go to death willingly with me or for me, because I happen to be the son of my august father, and there are as many more who would do the same for my own sake."

"Well?"

"From these I have recruited Devil Worshipers. From these I have chosen followers who first swore allegiance to me, and then joined this infamous order, but they have joined it only to serve me, and—a score of them have come here with me."

"That is good work, Ten-Ichi. That was foresight, indeed."

"It was one of these who was with me this afternoon. All of them will be present at the meeting when you are to receive your initiation."

"But how can they be present at that meeting?"

"Because they are among the number who have been ordered here by the general clique. They are Japanese wrestlers and athletes, every one of them. They are picked men, selected by me for their bravery, their strength, their adroitness, and their loyalty to me. I shall be at the meeting, and my score of followers will be there. But——"

"Well; but what?"

"We will only be a handful among many. I have told you that there are upward of six hundred Devil Worshipers in the city, and every last one of them who is able to walk will be present at that meeting."

"Then where in the world will they congregate? There is no place large enough for a secret meeting of that magnitude, which the police will not discover before the meeting assembles."

"Yes, there is a place and they have found it. It is

in a locality north of the city, in what you call, I think, Westchester County. There is much wild and mountainous country in that region, and in one place, shut in by the forests, there is an old mansion which has been deserted for many years. It is far away from every other habitation, and there is no road nor path near it. The meeting will be there.

"How you will be taken to it I do not know, but let me suggest one thing."

"What is that?"

"Once you have traced the heart on the pavement, and thus signified your intention to accept the terms offered by Dazaar, make yourself utterly passive. Let them do with you as they will, even to the end of the initiation. The time to act will come after that."

"I had already determined upon that point," replied the detective.

"Now, have you orders for me?" questioned Ten-Ichi.

"You seem to act pretty well without orders, Ten-Ichi. You have been a whole year preparing for this business while I had forgotten that such a person as Dazaar ever existed."

"I only happened by accident to learn of the plans against you," said Ten-Ichi modestly.

"You have done splendidly, my boy. Now, tell me; you said a moment ago that you knew of the kidnaping of Miss Tempest at about the time it occurred."

"Yes."

"Do you know where they have taken her?"

"Yes, to the house in Westchester that I have just described."

"And is Patsy there, also? And the others?"

"I suppose they are all there. I do not know."

"Then what is to hinder us from rescuing them this very night?"

"This: Because the only way in which you will ever see any of them, alive, will be to join the Devil Worshipers."

"How do you mean?"

"I don't know about Patsy and the others, but I do know about Miss Tempest."

"Well, what about her?"

"She is held there under a special guard. Her life is valued no more than the life of a worm or an insect. Those who guard her have orders at the first alarm of an attack upon the house, or at the first suggestion of a possibility of her being freed, to kill her without waiting for particulars—and there are too many of them to overcome by stealth. At the first alarm, one of those deadly daggers of Dazaar would be driven through Miss Tempest's heart. No, there is only one way to save her now."

"And that is by joining the Devil Worshipers."

"Yes, that is the only way."

"Then so be it. I will join."

"And you have no orders for me?"

"No, save to do as you have done, and to look for me at the house in Westchester, when the followers of Dazaar shall bring me there."

"Then, I will go now, but wait, there is one thing more: Chick will wish to follow you there, or to go with you."

"I know it, and he must not do so."

"No, his life would not be worth thirty cents were he a dozen times more clever than he is. I know whereof I speak."

As soon as Nick was alone he busied himself in preparing for the great things that were to happen before he could visit his own house again, for he had no intention of returning to it until after the initiation of the Devil Worshipers.

And when he finally did depart, he felt that he was prepared to face a hundred men with the resources he had concealed about him.

"Desperate circumstances demand desperate remedies," he murmured to himself when his toilet was completed. "If I am surrounded by four walls I do not care how far apart they may be now, and if there are six hundred men within those four walls, it matters little if they all attack me at once, if only I can arrange so as to keep the mass of them in front of me for a little time. But if the Devil Worshipers should strip me before the initiation, why, then, I must rely upon my muscles, my strength, my agility, and my fund of resource. Whatever happens, the Devil Worshipers shall find that Nick Carter is a hard proposition to down."

CHAPTER VIII.

PREPARING FOR THE INITIATION.

Nick Carter crossed the street to the house of Cora Tempest.

"Now, Martha," he said to the maid when she came to the door to admit him, "just a few questions for you to answer, if you please."

"Yes, sir."

"You are not to worry. I happen to know where your mistress is, and that she will be all right. She has gone out of town for a little time and will not return before the day after to-morrow. In the meantime you are to act just as usual here."

"Very good, sir. I feel greatly relieved, for I was worried about her."

"I want you to promise me that you won't go far away from the house until your mistress returns to it."

"All right, sir."

"And now you may return to your own quarters. I wish to pass a few moments in the library, and I will let myself out when I am ready to depart."

"Thank you, sir."

Martha returned to the basement, and Nick betook himself to the library.

He crossed the room directly to the table, and then, as his eyes rested upon a pad of paper, he started and uttered a quick breath of surprise, for scrawled upon the pad, as if in great haste and also as if the eyes had not followed the writing when it was done, he read these words:

"Help, Nick! Dazaa——"

That was all.

"Poor girl," mused the detective. "She had a pencil in her fingers when that devil who mesmerized her entered the room, and she knew the instant her eyes met his that she was done for. She managed to write that much before she lost control of herself, and he was so taken up in hypnotizing her that he never noticed it—or did not care about it."

It was quite dark when he was again upon the street, and he betook himself at once to the Waldorf, where he entered the café and ordered a substantial dinner.

While he was seated there, and his face was toward the

door, he several times noticed that swarthy-complexioned gentlemen passed the doorway.

Presently one of them entered and half crossed the café, but happening to raise his eyes he discovered Nick seated at a table and complacently devouring his dinner

It was evident that the man was greatly surprised, for he came to an abrupt stop and stared.

Nick, however, seemed to pay no attention to him, but continued with his meal, and the dark-complexioned fellow presently turned and hurried out of the room.

Then Nick permitted himself to smile.

"He has struck the first snag," he mused. "He and some of his friends have been for an hour or more keeping their eyes on a certain Nick Carter who is doubtless playing billiards in the billiard room, and lo! having just left that individual in the billiard room, this fellow walks in here and discovers that in some mysterious manner Nick Carter has got here before him. Now he has gone back, but only to find that Nick Carter is still playing billiards, and in another moment he will be here again to stare some more, and to wonder which is Nick Carter, after all.

"I wonder if Chick has drawn the heart on the pavement yet? If he hasn't they will be puzzled, and they won't know which is which until he really does it; and then they will wonder who in the devil I am. Hello! here comes the startled fellow now."

The same swarthy individual reëntered the café and crossed deliberately to the table next to Nick, and seating himself there, commenced deliberately to stare at the detective.

"I wonder what the game is now?" mused the detective. "Evidently he wishes to speak to me, but he wants to force me to speak first. All right, I'll take him up on the proposition."

He turned slowly and faced the man, and then, with a smile, he said:

"You seem to be interested in my appearance, sir?"

"Ah! Pardon me, eef you plee-ase. Yase, yase. I haf wondair eef you be Mistair Car-teer—no?"

"Certainly I am Mr. Carter. But I don't happen to know you. Who are you?"

"Ah! Pardone, sair, but I refair to zee Mistair Car-teer. Ah! You are zat Mistair Car-teer—no?—eh? vot? And ees there one othar Mistair Car-teer? No?—eh? vot?"

"Oh," replied Nick, "there are a lot of us. A half a dozen at least."

"Vot?—eh?—so many? Seex? Seex Mistair Carteers?"

The strange little man leaped from his chair and was gone, nor did the detective see him again, but after that, one by one, three swarthy individuals, all faultlessly dressed, and at ease in the corridors of the great hotel, entered the room, stared at him a moment, and then went out again.

And all the time Nick sat there smiling placidly while he continued with his dinner.

But when it was finished and he had paid the check, he left the table and strolled slowly into the billiard room.

Sure enough, it was as he had figured. His double—Chick, of course—was playing billiards at one of the tables, and as Nick approached him more than one of the occupants of the room stared at them.

Well they might have done so, for there seemed not to be a single point of difference in their appearance.

If one were standing at either end of the table, and while your back was turned they changed places, you would not have known that either had moved, so precisely alike were they in everything, even to the minutest details of dress.

Nor was this all that tended to astonish the people who were observing them.

As the two men approached each other, each extended his right hand, and each called out, in voices which sounded as if they might have proceeded from the same throat:

"Hello, Carter, old man, how are you?" and:

"Hello, Carter, old chap; glad to see you."

And then they shook hands with apparently the utmost cordiality.

The gentleman who was engaged in the game of billiards with Chick came around the table and remarked, with some jocularity:

"Would you mind telling me which gentleman I'm playing with? I don't think I care to engage both of you."

"Oh, take your choice," replied Nick. "We play about the same game."

"Twins?" asked the gentleman.

"No; no relation at all," replied Nick.

"What! You have the same name, haven't you? I think I heard you both use it."

"Oh, yes. The same names fore and aft."

"Eh?"

"Front and back, I mean. First and last. See it now?"

"Rather remarkable, isn't it, to be a coincidence?"

"We've got used to it; eh, Carter?"

"Quite," said Chick, going to the table with his cue.

There were only a few points left to make in the game and Chick quickly ran it out, and then he rejoined Nick, who had taken a seat at one of the tables near by.

"Have you chalked the heart on the pavement yet?" asked Nick.

"No. There was time enough after you arrived, and I thought there was such a thing as your changing your mind, so I waited."

"You may leave it till about midnight."

"You are still intent upon accepting that bluff of Dazaar's and taking the initiation of the Devil Worshipers?"

"No; I am going to have you take it."

"What?"

"I'm going to send you to take it for me."

Chick regarded his companion with so much incredulity in his gaze that Nick laughed outright.

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"I am trying to determine whether you are in earnest or not."

"I was never more in earnest in my life."

"But—I say, you know, it doesn't sound a bit like you."

"Why not?"

"Because it doesn't. If I had had any idea that you meant me to take the initiation for you, I should not have raised a single objection, but all the same it isn't like you, not at all."

"Again, why not?"

"Because—I say, have you found something where the danger will be about ten times greater than it will in that den of devils?"

"I think, Chick, we will both see all the danger we care

to witness before we are thirty-six hours older than we are now."

"Ha! I thought so."

"Thought what?"

"You have discovered that there will be more danger in staying ouside and looking like Nick Carter than there will be in going on the inside and taking chances with Dazaar, and hence, as always, you select the most dangerous post for yourself."

"Who in blazes cares a rap about the danger, Chick? Do you?"

"You know that I do not."

"Well, do you think I do?"

"You know I don't."

"Then what are you driving at?"

"I'm not doing the driving, you are."

"Right you be, sonny, see that you don't forget that, either."

"I won't."

"The fact is, Chick, Nick Carter, in *propria persona*, is not in the slightest danger, physically, from those devils, while everybody who knows him is in danger, and mighty serious danger at that. I had a long talk with Ten-Ichi after you left, and what passed between us decided me on a new plan—at least, it is partly new. You see, the point is, I want you inside that house, and I don't think you can get to it, even, unless you are taken there in my place.

"On the other hand, I think I can get to it and inside it myself.

"Now, my lad, I have several reasons for desiring you to fill my place to-morrow night, for that is when the initiation is to be, according to Ten-Ichi."

"One reason is sufficient for me."

"I know that, but you shall have them all:

"First, I don't think you could get to the house alone, and I know you would try, in spite of any orders I might give you. If you tried it, you would get yourself killed, and I'm not ready to part with you just yet.

"Second, I am equally certain that I can get to the house, and get inside of it, too, and you may assure yourself if I was not positive of it I would not run the risk of being left on the outside when such interesting things are to happen.

"Third, as Nick Carter, one of us must take the initiation, and it is more than likely that those devils will strip you, or at least go through your clothes and take everything you have about you, even if they do not send you into the ordeal naked."

"That's pleasant."

"Yes, it's all as pleasant—as the devil, isn't it?"

"Quite so."

"Fourth, I haven't any stomach for being deprived of my clothes, for I've got them loaded to the muzzle for bear, and I want to take into that meeting with me everything I have concealed about my person at the present moment. I'll make them think that even one man can be a mighty dangerous proposition when he is properly loaded.

"Fifth, as Nick Carter, undergoing the initiation, all eyes would be centered on me. That would bother me in the carrying out of my plans. I want to get Cora Tempest out of danger the very first thing I do after I enter that house, and if I go into it to take that initiation it would have to be the very last thing I did.

"Sixth—well, there are about ninety-nine more reasons, each better than the others, but I think you have heard enough, so now if you will take yourself outside and make a picture of a heart on the corner of Thirty-fifth and the avenue, you will find me waiting for you in room fifteen-thirty-five when you return. Come straight to the room, tell me all that has happened, and then I'll tell you what to do. Now go and trace the heart for the Princess of Hades."

CHAPTER IX.

THE LONE HOUSE IN THE WOODS.

"Well?" asked Nick, when Chick entered the room, where he was awaiting him, a half hour later.

"Well? I should say well! and with a vengeance," replied Chick, throwing himself into a chair. Then leaning forward he added, in a low tone:

"What language do you think it would be safest for us to talk? Let's try the Oaxacan; I don't believe any of those devils understand that." Then changing immediately, he said:

"We've got to talk quickly, too, for they are waiting for me—about a regiment of them, I should imagine."

"What happened?" said Nick, using the same dialect.

"This: I carried a piece of chalk with me from the billiard room, and as soon as I arrived at the corner of Thirty-fifth Street I traced a good-sized heart on the pavement, and then stood back to admire it. But, bless you, I hadn't more than got my eyes fixed on it when I felt a hand on my shoulder and a voice said in my ear:

"'You will be one with us, brother.'

"'Bet your life,' I replied. 'What is the next move?'

"'You will remain here as our guest in the hotel, until to-morrow night, and then we will take you to the meeting,' replied my informant; and then I noticed that there were half a dozen swarthy chaps grouped around me.

"Well, we turned back toward the hotel, and they all fell into line; when we got here I thought I could deceive them best by telling them the truth, so I said that I had promised to meet the gentleman who resembled me so strongly and that they would have to wait for me, whereupon one of them asked me if he was also a detective.

"'Not on your life,' I told them.

"There, that is all. I have got to go down and rejoin my brothers now. Give me what orders you have to give."

In as few words as possible Nick related all that Ten-Ichi had told him about the help that would be at hand, and having instructed Chick as fully as was possible under the circumstances, he closed by adding:

"You may rely upon the fact that I will be near at hand somewhere, probably inside the room where the initiation takes place, for I mean to go rather thoroughly through the house before it takes place, if possible."

And then they parted, Chick to rejoin his new associates, and Nick to retire for the night, for there was absolutely nothing more he could do before the following day.

As Chick expected, he found one of the men awaiting him in the hallway just outside the door of Nick's room, and another was stationed farther down the hall; there was still another at the bottom of the elevator shaft, and a fourth was in the billiard room, to which he directed his steps at once.

But he met each of them with a smile and a nod, as

if, having cast the die, he was resolved to see it through cheerfully.

The man who waited for him in the hall and who met him as he came out of Nick's room, asked him what had passed between him and his friend, but Chick only laughed as he replied:

"That, my friend, is distinctly none of your business, at least, not now. If after to-morrow night I find that you have a right to ask such questions, I will take you with me the next time I call upon him."

* * * * * * *

Nick Carter retired at about the hour of twelve-thirty.

At two-thirty he awoke, leaped out of the bed, glanced at his watch, and proceeded to don his clothing with great speed.

At two-forty-five he walked out of the hotel through the Thirty-third Street entrance, and, turning eastward, sought the Third Avenue elevated road, where he took a train and remained upon it until it would take him no farther.

There, he descended to the ground to find awaiting him, at the foot of the steps, an old-fashioned country carryall with an older-fashioned horse, if age were a criterion, and a man who seemed to be quite as hairy as the horse.

"Good," said Nick. "I see you received my message all right. Did you also get the letter?"

"Sure I did."

"And have you found such a place as I described in it?"

"Well, I ain't exactly found it, but I know where to find it. Fact is, I didn't have to look very far for information after I got your letter with the description."

"No! Why not?"

"Well, because it was a purty good description of the house I was born in."

"You don't say so! That's lucky!"

"Fact. I was born there, and so were all my brothers and sisters, and my father and grandfather before me. It belongs to me now, but the house is so old it can't be lived in, and it has all gone to rack and ruin long ago, besides, the town cut the road through in a new place, which left it away offn the line of travel, and now I reckon there don't anybody but tramps and thieves stop there for a lodging. I can't imagine what you want to go there for, Mr. Carter."

"Never mind that. How long will it take me to get there?"

"An hour and a half, or thereabouts."

"I want to get as near to the house as possible without being seen by anybody."

"Well, that's dead easy. I can put you clean inside of it without anybody's seeing you, if you want, and that in broad daylight, too."

"How can you do that?" It is exactly what I want."

"Well, you see, there is a deep ravine about thirty rods from the old place, and there used to be a big iron drain pipe from the house into the ravine. That pipe weren't no sort of use where it was, and I could make use of it somewhere else, so I tore it out. I reckon it left a hole big enough for you to crawl through without getting your clothes very dirty at that."

"Just the thing. Where does the drain lead to, in the house?"

"To the cellar; and there are two flights of stairs—that is, there used to be, but they are both rotted down now—which led up, one to the setting room and the other to the hall back of the kitchen."

"Good! That's all right. That is all I need to know. Take me to the ravine and tell me which way to go after we get there; and get me there before daylight; that's all I ask."

"I'll do it, Mr. Carter, or kill the hoss."

And he did do it.

Nick found it very dark and dubious work, finding his way through a ravine in total blackness, where he had never been before, but now and then he pressed the button of his little searchlight long enough to guide his steps, and so he presently found the mouth of the old drain which had been described to him.

It had been a lucky thought, his remembering Hiram Tompkins, who was called the walking cyclopedia of Westchester County, and in this instance, at least, the man had proved his claim to the title.

Daylight was just asserting itself when Nick arrived at the old drain, and he seated himself at the mouth of it, screened by the bushes which grew around it, and waited for the full light of day to spread over the world.

He ate a couple of sandwiches while he waited, and after an hour, when the sun was up, he cast one last look around him, and then, with never another look behind him, plunged into the hole in the earth, where few men, under the circumstances, would have dared to enter.

* * * * * * *

Singly and in pairs, soon after the advent of day, men began to arrive at the old house by devious ways and routes.

The house itself was so situated that it was almost impossible to guess that any person encountered upon one of the roads near it, could be going there. And woods, deep and dense, surrounded it on every side, so that, although before nightfall there were hundreds of people in the old house, it was doubtful if any resident of that district suspected that there were strangers in the neighborhood.

Nevertheless, the Devil Worshipers had arrived at their place of meeting, and the great ceremony of the initiation of Nick Carter into the mysteries of their terrible order was ready to proceed, for Chick, and his bodyguard, had arrived, also.

CHAPTER X.

THE DEVIL'S WEDDING.

If you, reader, could have stood outside the house and watched the arrivals, and later, had been permitted to enter and view the huge room which had been prepared for the ceremony of initiation, no doubt you would have wondered where all the paraphernalia could have come from.

The room itself had been prepared for the uses to which it was now to be put, by tearing out all the partitions on the second floor, leaving only an upright here and there to support the floor above it.

Next, every window had been securely boarded up and every chink through which a possible ray of light might be able to sift had been stuffed with cotton.

After that, the walls had been draped, and every bit of the drapery was of blood red. Even the floor and the ceiling were covered with it, so that there was one mass of red on every side, as well as above and below.

Next, there were no chairs in the room, in fact, not an article of furniture of any description, save that in the very center of the hall-like place there was a circular platform raised about fourteen inches above the floor, and upon this platform was a round stool. Platform and stool were also covered with red.

And there was one other object of interest.

At one end of the room, supported against the wall, was a huge shield, as red as blood, and from it dangled a series of straps, while sticking in it, in the form of a glittering cross, were scores of daggers, sharp pointed and wicked in their appearance.

Such, my readers, was the room in which the initiation was to be held, and so it appeared to Chickering Carter, when, shortly before midnight, he was thrust into it from a trapdoor over the stairs.

And one glance at him would have convinced you that Nick had figured well when he had delegated Chick to fill that part of the performance for him, for the assistant had been divested of his own clothing, and in its place was a suit of tight-fitting garments of the same blood-red hue as the decorations; in fact, he was arrayed in a veritable devil's dress, surmounted by a close-fitting hood, from which suggestive horns protruded into the air.

So much of his face as appeared at all, and that was merely a circular part of it, which included his eyes, nose, and mouth, had been dyed the same deep red.

Thus Chick was thrust into the huge apartment where the Devil Worshipers were to meet and where they were to initiate him into their order.

He believed himself to be utterly alone, when, in obedience to the orders given him, he sprang up the stairs and through the open trap, which was immediately closed after he had passed through, but while he stood there, half dazed by the brilliant lights after the utter darkness of a moment before, his eyes fell upon the platform in the middle of the room, and he saw the top of it, on which the stool rested, disappear from sight.

Then, as he watched, the figures of a group of devils dressed like himself appeared to rise out of the abyss before him.

They ascended slowly until their feet were level with the edge of the platform, when they stepped off on the floor, and, dropping upon their knees, began the formation of a circle around the space inclosed by the platform.

Scarcely had they assumed this kneeling attitude when a second group appeared, which followed the example set by the others; and then, group after group came into view until the procession seemed never ending, and the throng of kneeling devotees crowded the room in circle after circle of blood-red devils; and they formed in solid circles save only that a narrow aisle was left which extended from the platform to the shield, which has already been described.

There were hundreds of them. Chick had long ceased to count; and in moving about to give them room as they entered, he had been jostled and crowded many times, but always he was pressed in the one direction, which eventually led to the space beneath the shield—and there they left him unmolested.

There was not a sound in the room during all this time. Not a word was uttered, and, save for the pushing and thrusting which Chick was subjected to, not one of the devils appeared to be aware of his presence.

Hundreds of them there were—many hundreds, and never a word or a sound from one of them. Their cloth-clad feet gave forth no response to the touch of them against the floor, and their faces, dyed the same color as their costumes, made them all look alike, so that it seemed to Chick that, had there been a friend among them, it would have been impossible to identify him.

And yet, there was one significant incident, which happened almost at the last moment, before the last arrival through the hollow platform, and while the assistant was standing at his place beneath the shield.

He felt himself jostled once again, and as he sought to move, a hand seized his for an instant, detaining him, and in that instant he received a delicate pressure.

"Ten-Ichi," he thought to himself, but he made no sign, merely noticing that the one who had pressed his hand, knelt on the floor quite near to him.

And then the platform rose to its place for the last time while the devotees bowed their heads in awe—all save Chick, who was still standing, and who gazed in astonishment upon the scene before him.

Instead of that blood-red hue which marked every other occupant of the room, the figure which now appeared in the center of the platform, and standing erect on the stool before alluded to, was arrayed in unspotted white, with so much of the face as showed also of chalky whiteness—and the figure was of a woman.

"Dazaar! Irma Plavatski!" breathed Chick, in silence, to himself. "Heavens! Isn't she beautiful!"

She stood upon the stool like a statue in marble. In her right hand she grasped a trident, with the base of it resting against one of her feet on the stool. Her left hand was raised to a horizontal position, and the index finger was pointing straight at Chick.

Still, not a word was spoken, but, as if the horde of devils who were present were already instructed in what they were to do, they arose as with one impulse to their feet, and to a man turned so that their faces were toward Chick, and then each one raised his left hand in imitation of Dazaar, and pointed the index finger toward Chick.

He shuddered in spite of himself, for this pointing of hundreds of fingers at him by so many painted devils, and the strange and unbroken silence which accompanied it, was uncanny and also disconcerting.

"What next?" he thought. "I suppose they have arranged some horrible ordeal through which I must pass before I can be an accepted member of this crew; but whatever it is—whatever I am asked to do, I must acquiesce. B-r-r! I wish it were over. I'd rather fight the whole crew single-handed than to stand here in this manner and await their will when I haven't the least idea what it is to be, and when I know that, no matter what it is, I must consent to their wishes."

But there was no such ordeal as Chick anticipated awaiting him.

The ceremony of initiation into the order of Devil Worshipers was not to be consummated in a moment. There were other trials to which he was to be subjected before he could be taken into their hellish fold as one of them.

Even Ten-Ichi—as he afterward admitted—was not prepared for what was actually to occur, or he would have warned the detective about it.

Suddenly the silence was broken.

The white figure on the platform dropped her left hand

to her side, which motion was immediately imitated by the others, and in a rich voice, which penetrated to the farthest corner of the vast apartment, said:

"Nicholas Carter, have you come here with a direct purpose, and do you now, in the presence of the subjects of Satan, and in my presence, who by the grace of his satanic majesty, and the representative of hell—do you now forswear all that is past, and assume the responsibility of all that is to come?"

Chick bowed his head in an affirmative, but Dazaar was not to be satisfied with such a reply.

"Answer," she commanded.

"I do," said Chick.

"There was a compact between you and me before you traced the shape of a heart upon the pavement of the city—a compact to which the tracing of that heart was intended to be your signature," she continued. "Is that true?"

"It is," assented Chick.

"Did you trace that heart with your own hand?"

"I did," replied Chick truthfully.

"And you are prepared to carry out the conditions of that contract?"

"I am."

"Step forward, then, to this platform, for you may not be taken into the order, and have revealed to you its secrets, until you are espoused to me according to the rites of our society. Come here!"

Chick strode through the aisle until he stood close to the platform. Then Dazaar—or Irma, as you please—stepped down from the stool, and, extending her hand, seized his and assisted him to mount beside her; and as she pulled him toward her, he felt her wonderful eyes burning into his own so that his head swam and his senses seemed to reel almost into unconsciousness.

"Kneel!" she commanded, and he obeyed; and when she had taken a place beside him, upon her knees, she added:

"Repeat, as I shall do, the words which our supreme high priest will utter."

Then, from among the throng that was gathered around them, an individual stepped forward, and with both hands raised over his head, and in a resonant monotone, he sang these words, which Irma and Chick repeated in unison after him:

"I, at this moment forsake all that is past, forgetting those friends and associates who are living, as if they were dead, and cleaving only unto the present moment, and to the time that is to come after this moment, and blending my soul and my body with the soul and the body of my companion here at my side. I have no human ties, no friends, no memories after this moment, save those which are created by this act, and which will exist in this dual life I am about to live and lead. I abjure God and acknowledge the Devil as my master and kind, and I give myself, my soul, my body, and my life to Satan, through this companion to whom I will cleave, according to the compact made between us. For from this moment we are husband and wife, and servants of Satan. So be it."

There was an instant of silence, and then the chant was taken up again:

"And we both promise for this man here, that he may at the end of one year divorce himself from this obligation, provided that within the next fortnight he shall have taken upon himself the full vows and obligations of the disciples of Satan. So be it."

Then Chick heard the tread of stealthy feet behind him, and before he could turn to discover what that might portend, a heavy blanket was thrown over their heads, enveloping Irma with him in its folds.

And as the blanket fell upon them, he felt her arms encircle his neck, and her hot lips were thrust into sudden and rapturous contact with his own.

At the same instant he felt the platform sink beneath them, and he knew that he was being carried downward into darkness—he knew not what.

But Irma's lips were smothering him; her kisses were falling like rain upon him; he felt his senses reel, as with suffocation—and then the platform seemed to strike the bottom of the pit with a sudden jolt.

Chick at last felt himself alone in some cellarlike place. Dazaar had gone upward with the platform.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

At the moment when Chick entered the great room alone, as described in the last chapter, he was not unobserved, although he believed himself to be alone. The fact was that, as he stepped forward when the door closed behind him, a face was peering down upon him from above, and if he had but looked up and could have seen that face through the narrow opening to which it was pressed, he would instantly have recognized Nick Carter.

Nick, it must be remembered, had been an inmate of that house all that day, for he had arrived early in the morning.

Nor had he been idle since that time.

Once past the numerous guards which surrounded the place and within the portals of the house itself, he discovered that he could make his investigations almost without fear of molestation or discovery.

But search the house as he might, he could find no trace of the prisoners he sought, until it occurred to him that, in such a place as that, the most likely place of concealment for them would be immediately under the roof.

However, there seemed to be no stairs which led in that direction, and he had about concluded that there were none, when he chanced to light upon the method of the inmates for arriving at the top, or attic floor, by means of a slanting ladder that had been built between the outer and the inner wall of the frame of the house; and once he had mounted to that attic floor, his principal difficulties were over.

That floor was divided into numerous small, windowless rooms, each as dark as Erebus; but Nick's pocket lantern obviated that difficulty quickly.

Almost the first room he entered contained Patsy, shackled hand and foot, and chained to the studding of the house; and then, having liberated him, he called softly:

"Cora! Cora!"

"Here," came the quick reply; and in the room adjoining that occupied by Patsy he found her.

She had not been injured in any way, and it was the work of a moment to liberate her, and in a very short time the nurse and the four servants, among them being, of course, the faithful Joseph, were also set at liberty.

It was yet early, and there was plenty of time to take them out of the place before the opening of the cere-

monies that were to come, and so, with stealthy tread, he led the way down the slanting ladder and on through the house to the cellar, and so into the hole where the drain pipe had once been located.

Evening had just fallen when this was accomplished, and, directing Patsy to wait where he was for an hour, and at the end of that time to conduct them down the ravine, and so out upon the road and on to the house of Hiram Tompkins, he returned to the scene of the ceremonies of the Devil Worshipers.

At the parting with Cora, she had crept closely to him, and, without question, thrust her arms around his neck.

"Neither of us will ever be safe for a moment as long as that terrible woman lives," she whispered; "but is it wise for you to return——"

"Go with Patsy," he said, drawing away from her. "Fear nothing. He will take you home, and in the morning I will call and tell you all about it."

And so they parted.

* * * * * * *

Thus it was that at the moment when Chick entered the great room Nick was looking down upon him. He had discovered that the attic floor had been cut through in many places—that there were numerous trapdoors all over it, and that in the very center was located a huge one which opened downward, and from its center, by means of double doors, which could be let fall; and these doors were precisely what Nick wanted, for the reader will remember that he had prepared himself thoroughly for this enterprise.

The proceeding already described he watched with interest, and we may know how keenly alive he was to everything that happened there, when we know that he even saw that pressure of the hand which Ten-Ichi gave Chick as he passed him, and he was, therefore, able to recognize the young Jap, and so, through him, his score of followers.

He watched the proceeding closely, not yet determined upon the best moment for the interruption he intended; and so it was that he was unprepared for the sudden descent of the platform upon which Chick and Irma were standing side by side. He saw the blanket as it was thrown over their heads, and he saw the platform disappear—and he was on the point of censuring himself because he had waited so long, when, to his amazement, it reappeared again as suddenly as it had gone from view.

Nor was it unoccupied.

Chick was no longer there, to be sure, but the white, marblelike figure of the woman, with the trident in her right hand, was standing upon the stool with her left arm extended, exactly in the position in which she had first appeared.

Instantly the multitude of devotees dropped on their knees and bowed their heads—and what might have happened after that, had they remained uninterrupted, will never be known, for Nick Carter decided that the moment had come to act.

He stepped into a sling which he had arranged with ropes directly over the trapdoor, and then, kicking the bolts loose, he dropped through the opening, halfway to the floor beneath, and hung suspended there.

At the moment of dropping he fired his pistol three times into the air, and as he swung outward over the heads of the throng, he leaned far forward and cast the noose of a lasso with unerring aim directly around the figure in white upon the platform.

As the noose settled, he gave it a fierce jerk upward and caught the rope with a hitch around the sling in which he was seated, so that the figure in white was suspended from the floor and therefore helpless, and at the same instant he called out:

"Down, Ten-Ichi—you and your friends—faces to the floor—for your lives!"

Just over his head, attached to the sling, were arranged a number of tubes, and, as he called out, he seized one of these, pulled back the plunger, and shot the contents in a spraylike fog upon the mass of upturned faces below him, and, when that was emptied, he seized a second tube and repeated the operation; then a third, and then a fourth—and then—for his own face was swathed and muffled in heavy bandages—he gave the sling an extra swing, and so landed upon the space in front of the shield where Chick had stood, and near where Ten-Ichi now was.

What horrible thing was it that he had squirted among them?

That horde of men, dressed to represent devils, were shrieking, and cursing, and crying out with pain. They were running hither and thither. Some of them had managed to reach the trapdoor through which Chick had been thrust into the room, and this they raised, and then they tumbled over one another in their eagerness to escape from the room. And they coughed, and yelled, and rubbed their eyes, and fought with one another, screaming and shrieking, pitching headlong down the stairs, striking those in front of them, and kicking at those who were behind them in their mad efforts to escape, for the firing of the pistols, the lassoing of the figure in white, the shouts of the detective, and then the horrible liquid that had sprayed upon them, blinding and choking them, had made them think that they were attacked by an armed force greater than their own numbers.

And Nick Carter watched them and laughed.

And Ten-Ichi, seeing the bandages covering the mouth and nostrils of his chief, tore a part of his devil's uniform from his body and covered his own face with it, directing his followers to do the same.

"They are escaping!" he shouted through the bandages, as the horde tumbled and fell over one another through the trapdoor.

"Let them go. We have what we came after," replied Nick, pointing toward the swaying figure in white, where it hung suspended by the waist almost in the center of the room. "I brought a hundred tablets of concentrated ammonia, and a few good squirt guns with me. That is what is the matter with the crew. We could not capture them all if we tried, and we could do nothing with them worth while if we did so. Let them go. I want her—that woman. The others may go—until they cross my path again."

And they went, indeed!

Within ten minutes there was not a sign of one of the devils left in the room save here and there the torn remnants of a Mephistophelian costume.

"And Chick! Where is he?" he added, after an instant's pause.

As if in reply to his question, the platform, directly under the dangling figure in white, disappeared from view

as he spoke, but as Nick leaped forward toward it, it reappeared again, and a figure in red leaped into the air and started toward the detective.

"Here!" he cried. "Chick is here," and he plunged forward upon his face at the feet of Nick Carter, panting and breathless, but otherwise apparently unhurt.

Chick, finding himself alone and learning the mechanism of the platform, knew from the noise above that Nick had opened fire, and had come up again. He was apparently unhurt, but later it was discovered that he had received a slight flesh wound.

There was a reunion of friends at Nick Carter's house the following day, when Ten-Ichi was given the welcome he so richly deserved for his return to New York at the opportune moment when it had seemed as if the Devil Worshipers must triumph over the detective.

But no person ever triumphed over Nick Carter for long at a time. Do you know why, my reader? Let me tell it in the words of Cora Tempest, when she congratulated him upon his victory.

"You always win, and you always will win, Nick," she said, "because you think the truth, act the truth, speak the truth, and live the truth. You are the living embodiment of the truth, and nothing can beat—the truth."

THE END.

The reader will notice that Chick had received a slight flesh wound. It was apparently inconsiderable, but it led to serious results, for it was the starting point of one of the most trying and terrible experiences that Nick Carter's first assistant had ever passed through.

The true facts of this experience, and the account of the end of Dazaar, will be found in next week's issue, No. 77, out February 28th. The story is entitled "In the Shadow of Dazaar; or, At the Mercy of Vampires."

SPOILED A SPANISH PLOT.

Of the many quaint and curious customs, traditions, and privileges prevailing in Holland none is more extraordinary than a certain privilege that has been enjoyed by the boys of Amsterdam for nearly 300 years.

At a fixed time each summer these boys gather by the hundreds in the great square called the Dam, situated in the center of the city. Each boy has a drum slung over his shoulder.

Facing this square is the Stock Exchange, and on the occasion in question, just as soon as the day's business is over, as many of the boys as can crowd into the building. They proceed to the floor of the exchange, where, pursuant to this odd custom, they are permitted to march about, singing and beating upon their drums.

The origin of this custom, it is said, is as follows:

One afternoon in the year 1622 a crowd of boys playing in the Dam lost a ball in the canal that in those days skirted one side of the square. One of the lads, while climbing in among the piles on which the building stood, found instead of his ball a boat moored in a dark corner and loaded with boxes of gunpowder. This showed clearly enough, what was afterward ascertained with certainty, the intention of the Spanish conspirators to blow up the Stock Exchange while it was crowded, as it was every day, with the leading citizens of the city.

The boy who stumbled upon the gunpowder at once hurried to the town authorities with his news. The boatload of explosives was quietly sunk in the canal, and the Spanish plot thus frustrated.

When the burgesses asked the boy what reward he desired for the service he had rendered the town, he replied that so long as there was a stock exchange in Amsterdam the boys of the town would like to be permitted to make the floor of the exchange their playground during a certain part of the year. The request was granted, and so the custom survives.

Kit Keen, the Crook Catcher;

Or, THE KING OF THE KIDNAPERS.

By ALDEN F. BRADSHAW.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BITER BITTEN.

The young sleuth's face flushed with delight when he heard the words of the detective chief.

He had not made a mistake, then, in having Satan run down the man who had been shadowing his home, as he feared he might have done.

The man whom the chief had designated the King of the Crooks seemed to have lost his nerve, after his two hours' wait under Satan's eye, and his failure to kill Kit Keen and the dog, when escape and revenge seemed within his grasp, for he knew that he was a dead shot with the revolver, and could have dropped both with ease.

The sight of the great detective chief, whom he well knew by sight, also aided in giving his nerves a shake.

So he sat there livid-faced, and quivering.

"I am glad you know him, sir, and that I have not done wrong."

"You stick to the right track wonderfully well, Kit. You could not go wrong in protecting yourself from one who has twice been shadowing you, and perhaps oftener when you were not aware of it. You have caught a prize in this man," said the chief, "and won a reward offered, both by the government and the city of Chicago, for you have heard of Al King, the counterfeiter?"

"Yes, sir, often."

"This is your man."

"Al King?"

"Yes."

"I was told that he had as many names as he has disguises, and when twice captured had escaped from prison."

"Yes; he bought his way out with counterfeit money. In some way he got hold of it in prison, through his brother, it was said, who visited him disguised as a preacher once, and as a lawyer another time, to take testimony regarding some case he knew about; but he escaped twice, and we have not been able to catch him, though you have done the trick very neatly and with dispatch."

"I am very glad of it, sir."

"Not more so than I am, my boy. But I can tell you more about your prisoner."

"What's that, sir?"

"It is a strange thing that he was captured just where his brother lost his life."

"His brother?"

"Yes, and by your dog, Satan."

"I don't understand, sir."

"That fellow there, under the name now of Doc Reynolds, for he was a doctor, but prepared to be a crook, was the brother of Dick Crouch, whom your dog Satan killed in this house."

Kit Keen was astounded.

"Doc Reynolds came here to kill you," continued the chief.

"To kill me?"

"Yes, and your dog Satan."

"It is a lie," shouted the prisoner rousing himself.

Unheeding him, the chief continued:

"Dick Crouch twice risked hanging on the gallows to get into prison to save his brother. Satan then killed Dick Crouch the night he sneaked into your home to rob, or kill, and the dog belonged to you. Now, Kit, this man came here to kill you and your dog, and—the biter got bitten."

"It seems so, sir."

"I take it, also, that he was on the watch for your return, and, supposing you had considerable money, he expected to find that here also."

"What do you wish to do with him, sir?"

"Jail him first thing."

Saying which, the chief advanced and clapped the handcuffs on Kit's prisoner. Leading him out of the cottage, he bundled him into the carriage, and got in after him.

"There's some reason for this fellow's being in town," said the chief, in parting from Kit, "and I may want you to go on his case. Hold yourself in readiness for it."

"Yes, sir," answered Kit.

"In the meantime," continued the chief, "let me know of anything new in connection with the kidnaping case. Good night."

"Good night, chief."

The carriage door snapped and the chief rode away with his prisoner, leaving Kit standing on the sidewalk, flushed with pride and pleasure at the brilliant stroke he had made and at the confidence the famous chief was placing in him.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE YOUNG SLEUTH'S BUSINESS CALL.

It was late in the afternoon of the next day before Kit and Satan turned out for business.

They went to a restaurant and had a good lunch, the man charging double for what the dog ate, and Kit paid it willingly, and with the remark:

"I'm considerable of a feeder myself, Satan, but you can take the cake and the et ceteras with it; but the Good Book says 'the laborer is worthy of his hire,' as I learned it at Sunday school, and I guess you has earned yourn an' more, too."

Then Kit and the dog returned to the cottage, and the young detective sat down and wrote a letter, which he put in his pocket carefully, looked to see that his make-up as a bootblack would stand close inspection, and, with a good-by to Satan, went out on a new trail.

His destination was the home of Mrs. Bent, the mother of the man who had been killed three nights before by the exploding of his pistol.

As he was not anxious to get there before dark, he went to a news stand and gave the boy a quarter to let him look over his papers.

Both the morning and afternoon editions were full of the "recent lawless deeds" done in Chicago.

The "Saul Bent murder," as it was called, was being still worked on, with "roasting," as usual, for the police and detective force for not finding the murderer, though all admitted that the killing of Bent was, indeed, a service to the city.

The "Murder of the Tramp in the Lumber Yard" was also written up, and the breezy writers of the press, the never-to-be-downed reporters, had asked the reading public a few hard questions.

"How could a man be shot with a knife, for a bullet wound had killed him, and yet only a knife had been found by the body?"

"If a suicide, where was the pistol with which life had been taken?"

"If killed for his money, why had it not been taken?"

"Who was he?"

These questions remained unanswered, greatly to Kit Keen's satisfaction.

The young sleuth was glad, also, to see that the watches found on the dead man, and other things, had been claimed by the owners, who recognized the dead man as the one who had robbed them.

In this case, also, Kit saw that the city had been a gainer by the mysterious death of the tramp.

Kit noticed that nothing was said of the capture of Doc Reynolds.

As the time had come for his visit, Kit wandered in the direction of Mrs. Bent's home.

Her evil son had been buried in the morning, with, of course, a large crowd of "mourners," who attended from morbid curiosity, and the woman was alone, she having dismissed the old woman gossips who would have liked to talk over the sad affair with her.

She was both tired and in a bad humor when Kit knocked at the door.

"Who be there?"

"A young feller."

"What does yer want at this time o' night?"

It was just eight o'clock, but Kit said innocently:

"I knows it's late, missus, but I has a letter fer ye."

"Who is it from?"

"A pal o' Saul's," and Kit felt that he was getting along fast as a young liar; but he excused it on the plea of duty in that case.

"What's his name?"

"'Sh—— I'll tell yer—lemme in, missus, fer it's got ter be looked to."

Mrs. Bent took a close look up and down the street and then opened the door, while Kit glided in as quickly as a house cat.

The boy put his fingers on his lips and led the way to the back room, where there was a bright light.

The woman followed, eyed him closely, seemed satisfied that he was a "bad one," and said:

"Give me ther letter."

Kit handed her the one he had himself written.

"Who is it writ it?"

"'Sh! Read it."

"I haven't my glasses on; but yer say it's a friend of Saul's?"

"The gent who was in ther nuss with him ther other night, missus."

Mrs. Bent quickly found her glasses, put them on, and

tore open the letter in a way that showed she was not used to getting them by mail or hand.

Kit watched her as a cat would a mouse.

CHAPTER XIV.

KIT SETS A TRAP.

Mrs. Bent regarded the letter, when open, in a way that convinced Kit that she did not know any too much about reading.

She then asked:

"Who be you, young man?"

"The fellers call me Sammy Shine-em-up, missus."

"Where is yer livin' home?"

"Ther street; but I know'd yer poor son Saul, missus," and Kit wiped his eyes on his sleeve.

"They all liked Saul, but he were not a good son ter me, save when he wanted ter help himself."

"I know it all, fer I was with 'em t'other night, but lay low, yer bet."

"Did yer see Saul kilt?"

"Yes, missus."

"Who kilt him?"

"There were a feller as run in when ther gal piped up, an' he an' Saul hed it rough an' tumble, an' yer son's gun goes off an' thet ends it."

"Why didn't ther gent help my son?"

"Well, yer sees, ther same feller hit him a dig on ther brain pan thet knocked him out, an' the gal skipped off in the hearse with her reskooer—see? an' ther gent dug dirt, too, fer ther cops was blowin' ther whistles an' things was gettin' hot, I tell yer, so I skooted, too, an' on'y Saul got it in ther neck."

"Well, it were a pity."

"Yes, missus, fer ther was good money in it fer you, I guess."

"How does yer know?"

"Oh, I ain't no born fool, if I is young, an' I knows that this gent put up ther job ter kidnap ther pretty gal, an' Saul got ther boodle ter help him in ther game, while you was ter be a mother to ther young leddy."

It was a bold break for the young detective to make, for some of it was guesswork; but Kit was a bold youth, and ventured.

He saw that he had hit the nail on the head, for the woman said nothing, and Kit went on:

"If were sure to win, on'y thet strange feller run in an' broke up ther game; but ther gent has got him fixed with boodle, an' he ain't sayin' nuthin' as yer sees by ther papers."

"An' ther gent he's got ter pay me big money fer my poor, dead boy."

The woman wiped her eyes and so did Kit, who then said:

"Better read ther letter, missus, an' see what it tells yer."

"You read it, sonny, fer my eyes is blinded by weepin', an' you seems ter be in ther game."

"You bet I is, an' in it ter stay, an' I'll see justice done yer, missus," and Kit read the letter in a whisper and very slowly, as follows:

"I mourn the death of your dear son, and will repay you well for his loss. No suspicion falls upon me and none on you, and I have bought off the one who did the deed. I wish the lady to go to your house on a certain night, in the care of some one you can tell me is true, some friend of your son, and you are to have the minister there to marry us. I will let you know in time, and you can trust the boy, who will report to me what your reply is. H. W."

"Well, thet's han'some in him, fer he says he will pay well, en' Saul told me he were a perfect gent. Ther room is ready for ther leddy, an' I knows ther man ter help him—Vic Handy. Does yer know him, sonny?"

"I'll find him, if yer tells me whar ter look fer him."

"On ther top flo' o' ther Night Hawks' Roost. Ask fer Mrs. Handy, an' she'll tell yer whar Vic is, fer he's ter lay low in daylight, as he's wanted out at Joliet."

"Who is ther leddy?"

"Well, Saul didn't know; but he said she had lots o' rocks, an' ther gent wanted ter marry her an' then he'd git his share, so I knows ther man ter splice 'em—ther same as before."

"A reg'lar sky pilot?"

"Waal, he ain't now, fer ther congregation kicked him out fer backslidin'; but he'll do it fer ther dough, an' everything goes. He come round commiseratin' me 'bout poor Saul, an' struck me fer a ten of ther fee he didn't get."

There flashed through Kit's mind that his call had panned out well; that he had "struck it rich," as he said to himself, and he shed a few more tears for "poor Saul," and took his leave.

He went to supper at a place on Randolph Street, and then wended his way to see his friend, the detective chief.

The young sleuth found the chief in his private office, was admitted by Jenks, who had come to know him and had his orders, and the old and young ferrets were engaged in earnest conversation for an hour.

"Kit, you are always springing some new surprise on me. You are a wonder, and I feel that you are going to entrap another bunch of crooks," said the chief.

"I hope so, sir, and it looks that way now."

"It certainly does; but, as you say, that lovely girl must be protected in this matter, for she is wholly innocent, and her loving a scamp is not her fault, as she believes him a good man and that his devotion to her led him to do what he did, for fear her father would refuse to let him have her. I have looked his record up, and he is said to be a well-to-do business man, a little wild, but there can be nothing found out against him."

"He don't look right to me, sir, but I will soon know, for I intend to pay him a call, and also the young lady, and she must give him the slip."

"Yes, and doubtless will; but go in, Kit, and play your cards to win in your own way, for I will back you, and Detective Danvers and Keefe are held ready for your call."

"Thank you, sir," and Kit left headquarters and returned to his little home.

CHAPTER XV.

SATAN CHANGES MASTERS.

Kit Keen's thoughts were very busy as he went homeward after the interview with Mrs. Bent.

He had made a discovery of importance, and one that greatly interested him.

Mrs. Bent was as deep in crooked deeds as had been her son, in spite of her attempt to assume an air of innocence, appear to be a hard-working woman and keep up a show of shabby respectability.

Mrs. Bent had an affection for only herself, and certainly had been weaned from her son by his treatment of her, and not through his evil life.

Through him she had a chance to make a good stake, as a "receiver of stolen goods," or, more plainly speaking, to keep Florence Crandall in hiding until the man who sought her fortune through her hand might force her to marry him by fair or foul means.

Kit supposed that Harvey Wilbur must love Florence Crandall, for she was a young girl to win a man's love through her beauty and her true character, independent of her being an heiress; but the young sleuth was wise for his years, and felt sure that there was some trouble—that perhaps the man, in spite of his good looks, gentlemanly appearance, and apparently being in a good business, was not acceptable to the parents of the young lady.

"When she knows him, then she won't love him," was Kit's argument, and his mind was made up that she should know him.

But first he must know him himself.

To do this Kit decided to play as bold a game with Harvey Wilbur as he had with Mrs. Bent.

He went to his home, had supper with his dumb pard, Satan, and sat down to lay his plans.

He soon decided what he should do, and he went out, taking Satan with him for a run.

Kit did not care to see Harvey Wilbur then; he was not prepared to do so; he merely wanted to have a close survey of his place and the surroundings.

That part of the town was quiet at night, but lights were here and there visible in the windows of houses.

There was a light in the second floor over the office of Harvey Wilbur.

It was doubtless where he lived.

That the man, with his face disfigured with adhesive plaster, would not care to go out, Kit argued, and, therefore, would be at home.

Suddenly he decided he would like a look at the man's rooms.

It was late, but he would try it.

Still dressed as a street arab, Kit, with Satan at his heels, rang the hall-door bell.

Through a speaking tube came the question:

"Who is it?"

"A young gent to see Mr.. Wilbur," Kit answered, through the tube.

"I have retired, and do not feel well—leave your card in the box, please."

"That's him," muttered Kit, and he called back:

"I'm ther young feller as shined yer boots, boss, and give yer a letter."

"Ah! come up."

The spring lock was pulled back, the door opened, and Kit entered.

At the top of the steps stood Harvey Wilbur in dressing gown and slippers.

"Have you a letter for me, my boy?"

"Nit, but I has some chin music ter give yer."

"You have seen her?"

"Hev I? Well, I guess, and give her your letter an' she told me ter tell you she'd write soon, an' yer was not ter git black in ther face from worry o' mind, an' yer c'u'd trust me fer keeps."

"When will she write?"

"Soon's she gits over considerin', an' I is ter bring ther letter; but you is not ter write her until you hears, as trouble might come of it. I tells yer that letter jist teched her heart an' funny bone, fer she smiled until she weeped, an' weeped until she smole, jist ther same as if she were readin' po'try an' funny jokes."

"I am glad she was pleased," and the man's eyes were upon Satan as he stood in the doorway.

"Is that your dog?"

"It's my bruther—ther only kin I has got."

"What's his name?"

"Satan."

"The devil of a name for a dog."

"That's what—but it goes."

"Where did you get him?"

"Stole him."

"You young thief."

"That's what."

"What will you take for him?"

"Does yer take me fer one of them Bible guys thet sold their bruther acause he wore a spotted coat an' they hed none? No, sir, Satan is not fer sale."

"I'll make it a hundred."

"It don't fetch; but I'll tell yer what I'll do, boss."

"Well?"

"I'll lend him ter yer fer a time, until I gits a roost of my own, fer ther cops is a-thinkin' I stole him."

"Good! Is he kind?"

"No bull terrier is more kinder; but yer hes dandy rooms here, and I knows Satan will be O. K.; but maybe yer don't want no young feller 'bout my size an' age ter keep yer from bein' lonesome."

The man was silent a moment and then said:

"Leave the dog now and he shall have good care, and I'll see later what I will do about taking you."

Kit nodded his thanks, and said:

"I'll jist whisper ter Satan not ter git homesick, seein' as I'll not be with him. Don't be cross with him, an' when yer feeds him, don't be stingy, fer he loves grub."

"I'll remember your instructions, my boy," and at Kit's suggestion, Harvey Wilbur went to the rear rooms and got something to eat for Satan, giving it to him himself.

"Now, Satan, yer is ter live in this palaice fer a time, an' so behave yerse'f like a dog gent, an' maybe I kin git here one day."

Satan seemed to understand all that Kit said, and saw him depart, lying down on a rug as though to go to sleep.

Chuckling to himself, Kit started homeward.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MESSENGER BOY.

Florence Crandall was again gathering flowers when she saw Kit come into the yard.

She gave him the basket to carry for her, and at once plied him with questions as to whether he had again seen Harvey Wilbur, and if he had a letter for her.

"Not any letter, miss, but I come ter say I seen him an' he wants ter know if your pa an' ma hes come home yit?"

"Not yet, and they will be detained for several days, for I had letters from them to-day; but how is Mr. Wilbur's head where he got hurt?"

"Gettin' better, miss; but he's got ter go out o' town fer a day or two on business, he said. When he comes back I'll tell yer." and Kit left the young lady, his mind greatly at ease, as he said to himself:

"Now my mind is easy, for there's no telling what a girl will do, and I have been afraid she would write him, or see him, and spile my game. I'll skip home and fix to play my trump card on the man that planned to marry her in such a mean way."

Two hours after, a bright-looking messenger boy approached the real-estate office of Harvey Wilbur & Co.

His uniform was not a new one, his cap a trifle large for his head, but he looked like a youth who was no slouch and could take care of himself.

Satan lay at the door of the office, taking life coolly, but rose quickly as the messenger boy approached; but a low order to the dog caused him to lie down again.

In the office, looking over his books, was Harvey Wilbur.

As before, he was alone, and no one was visible in the rear office, as far as the messenger boy could see.

"You're Mr. Wilbur, ain't you?"

The man looked up and answered:

"Yes; have you a message for me, or a letter?"

"No, sir, for the party I came from don't write letters the police might get hold of."

"What do you mean?"

"You knew Saul Bent, didn't you?"

"Who was he?" and the man's face paled.

"Oh, I'm on, and you can talk to me, for I was Saul Bent's young pard an' he got me my job, so I could be useful to him. His mother sent me to you."

Harvey Wilbur looked straight into the face of the messenger.

But his gaze was met with a half-impudent, half-knowing stare, and the man said:

"Tell me what you want."

"You see, I know about the little racket that caused poor Saul to turn up his toes, and as he trusted me, his mother does, too, and sent me to tell you that I can help you out in that girl affair, and her house is all ready and a preacher, too, whenever you care to try it on again."

This was plain enough, and the man could no longer dodge the question.

The young detective was posted, certainly, as to his affairs, as far as his hiring Saul Bent was concerned to aid in the kidnaping of Florence Crandall.

Harvey Wilbur frowned to feel that such a young fellow had been trusted with his secret; but he knew it, and there was no help for it.

He feared to attempt to brazen the thing out by denying any knowledge of Saul Bent, for the messenger might know too much.

Another look into Kit's face seemed to convince him that he might do even better than had Saul Bent.

So he said:

"You are a messenger boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"How can you get time to come here?"

"Say I've got a call from a gent I met on the street; fill up my ticket for time and amount, and the one I am serving pays the freight—see?"

"I think I do; but who else knows of your coming here besides Mrs. Bent?"

"No one else is on, for Saul was close-mouthed as a clam, and only took me in because I helped out by getting the rig for you and looking up the parson. Me an' Saul have been in dead-sporty games before, and Mrs. Bent knows me and wanted me to see you, for she's out burying expenses on Saul, and says the old gag can be worked just as it was arranged, and I'm to do the underground work."

"I believe it will be all right, and I'll pay you well; but I must communicate with the lady first, get her answer, and then arrange to post all interested."

"I can take a note to the lady and bring you her answer, and I'll fix it all with Mrs. Bent and have the preacher there."

"I'll think it over and telephone down for you by number."

"All right; but I was sent to Mr. Crandall's lawyer with a telegram which I put in the envelope and read, and that's what made me go to Mrs. Bent about it."

"What was the telegram?" anxiously asked Harvey Wilbur.

"It was from Mr. Crandall, who is in Detroit with his wife, and told his lawyer to arrange matters for himself and family to start for New York within a week to sail for Europe, and say nothing about it."

The man started at this and said:

"Then I must act at once. I will write the letter now for you to take to Miss Crandall. If she is out, wait to see her."

"Yes, sir; but can I play with your dog, or will he bite me?"

"You had better not worry him, for he's a fierce dumb brute."

Just then, as though to show how fierce he was, Satan barked.

"Great Scott! do you call that a dumb brute?" cried Kit.

But Satan showed no anger toward him, and soon they were getting along famously, for the messenger was feeding him with peanut brittle.

After a long wait, Harvey Wilbur finished his letter to Florence Crandall, and Kit started off with it at a run.

TO BE CONTINUED.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

By HANK, THE HUNTER.

Mark Sefton's cabin was upon the outskirts of the village. He had chosen it there at first from the superior beauty of the location, and thinking that the settlement would build toward it. On the contrary, however, it took an opposite direction, and Mark's cabin, while it bloomed amid rustic beauty, was rather too remote from the village for safety. The first fact tempted him to remain in the place he had chosen, and his lovely wife, familiarized with the danger of border life, experienced no timidity in so doing. The more that as the months wore on, they continued safe from molestation.

Indeed, the Indians seemed at this time to be under a species of intimidation from the size and increasing number of the settlements.

It proved, however, but a longer lull than usual in the tempest. The savages were only consolidating their strength, and awaiting a favorable opportunity. Their

plans were all ripe for a united onslaught upon the settlements, which must have ended in very general extermination, when some discord arose in their councils, and suddenly the tribes were scattered and dissevered to such an extent as was probably the ultimate safety of the settlers.

The dissevered bands, however, patrolled the country, massacring and burning, and carrying more or less devastation in their train.

Mark Sefton began to think it was about time to transfer his family nearer to the village, but still lingered till trouble really came.

He had been to the settlement upon some errand, and was returning, when at an opening in the woods, through which he could discern his own cabin, he saw that it was surrounded by savages in all their horrid panoply of war paint, and brandishing their glittering tomahawks above their heads.

As he thought of his helpless wife and children, his first impulse was to rush singly to their rescue, but an instant's reflection convinced him of the madness of such a movement, which could only end in his own destruction and be of no service to his hapless family. He was about to return instantly to the settlement for assistance, when, as he took the first eager steps in that direction, he saw the dark forms of two Indians glide into the path between him and the village, perhaps even then upon the watch for him.

Fortunately their faces were turned from him at the instant, and he had time to retreat behind a tree. As the two receded toward the town, he sprang into the tree, and mounted swiftly among its screening foliage. This answered the twofold purpose of concealing him, and enabling him, almost crazed as he was with anxiety concerning his family, to watch the turn of events about the cabin. He soon reached a height—the tree being a tall one—that enabled him, without being himself seen, to see what was going on at his home.

He could see nothing of his wife or the children, and was just yielding to the awful apprehension that they had already been murdered, when he perceived what in the frenzy of the first moments he had not noticed—that the Indians, instead of being engaged in pillaging the house, or piling combustibles about it, were gathered together at a little distance, seemingly in council, and gesticulating toward the house, which he now noticed had both its door and window closed. Could it be possible that Mrs. Sefton had perceived the approach of the Indians in time to close and barricade window and door? He began to hope so, and a few minutes' careful observation of it, and the movements of the savages, convinced him that this was the case.

The cabin was built of stout logs, with a door and one window, not easy of access, except by means which the assailants might fear to use. The discharge of their firearms, or the firing of the cabin, would attract the attention of the village, and it would take time to batter down the door. They, however, after some deliberation, were preparing to resort to the last-mentioned means of forcing an entrance, when, to the horror of Sefton, his oldest child, a lad of ten, returning from some boyish excursion into the forest, bounded, unsuspicious of danger, into their very midst. So silent had they been that the poor child did not see them until it was quite too late to make a movement toward escape.

A cry of terror broke from his lips then, that must have smote to the heart of the mother within, and well-nigh maddened the wretched father, cooped up there within view, but unable to be of any assistance to his beloved ones.

Knowing the cruel foe as he did, he saw at once the use they would make of their captive. Approaching the cabin, they signified to Mrs. Sefton that unless she yielded herself up, her child should die there before her door, within sound of her voice.

Now Mark indeed trembled, for he knew that far from insuring her own safety, and that of the remaining dear ones with her, she would only deliver herself and them to certain destruction, if she yielded to maternal terror for her boy, and came forth.

Mary Sefton, however, proved herself true to the experience which years amid such perils had taught her. She made no sign of having heard the savage threat.

Mark ground his teeth with rage, as he watched the next proceedings.

Placing the terrified child against the cabin door, they amused themselves for a little while brandishing their tomahawks and hunting knives in his face, well knowing that every cry he made must be keenest torture to the mother within; then, retiring a little, they flung their weapons at him, careful, however, not to hit him.

Whatever Mrs. Sefton suffered—and her agony must have been almost unendurable—she remained firmly within, well knowing that she could not aid her boy if she went out to him.

Mark, knowing that the failure of these efforts on the part of the savages to terrify her into yielding would be followed by some more decided action soon, resolved at any risk to endeavor to reach the town and secure aid.

Sliding noiselessly down the tree, he listened a moment, and carefully moved away, avoiding the path, and stopping constantly to listen if any one were near him. It was growing dusk by this time—a favorable circumstance for him.

Just as he was about to plunge into the clearing that separated the settlement from the woods, he perceived a tall Indian slowly making the circuit of the woods, and instantly shrank into shadow.

The Indian paused, looking keenly about him, and Mark almost gave himself up for lost. But the increasing darkness and the thick underbrush concealed him.

He saw, however, that it would be very dangerous to attempt to cross the clearing, as in the present light, once out of the shadow of the woods, the long-sighted Indian could easily see him, and, if he succeeded in escaping, would give the alarm to the rest, and thus enable them to make off with their captive. His desire was to surprise and surround them. The only means left him, then, was to make his way to a small stream which lay to the right, and if he could reach it, proceed thence under cover of the bank toward the town.

He had come to the stream, and was descending the bank, when the same Indian he had before seen rose up at the very edge of the water, but seemingly unconscious of his vicinity. It was too late to retreat now, however, and, obeying a sudden impulse to the only course that seemed left him, Mark, who was sinewy and athletic as a young Indian, sprang at the throat of the savage, and before he could utter a sound had borne him to the

ground, and, after an instant's struggle, buried his knife in his heart.

Pushing the body into the stream, to make matters sure, Mark set off swiftly now toward the settlement.

In an incredibly short space of time a strong party was roused and equipped, and, led by Mark along the very route he had come, succeeded eventually in surrounding the Indians, and, after a brief struggle, capturing or killing most of them.

Mark's boy was rescued from their hands unharmed, and Mark himself placed him in the arms of the brave but now almost fainting mother. Mark Sefton, man as he was, almost sobbed with emotion as he gathered his dear ones once more to his embrace, safe from the tomahawk and the scalping knife.

THE SIGNAL.

Semyon Ivanoff served as a signalman on a Russian railway. Another signalman, who was nearer the station, was a thin, wiry young fellow. He and Semyon first met on the line, halfway between the signal boxes, as they were on their rounds. They struck up an acquaintance. Semyon and Vasily would meet on the line, sit down beside it, smoke their pipes, and fall to discussing their mode of life.

One day Vasily said that he was very discontented and thought he should soon leave his occupation.

"Where will you go?" asked Semyon. "Don't abandon good for the sake of worse. Here you have your house, and you are warm, and you have a bit of land. Your wife is a good worker——"

"A bit of land! I'd like to have you take a look at my bit of land. There's not so much as a twig on it. Last spring I planted cabbages, and along came the inspector.

"'What's the meaning of this?' says he. 'Why do you do this without reporting it? What do you mean by doing it without permission? Dig those up, and let no trace of them be left! Three roubles fine!"

Vasily paused, took a pull at his pipe, and said softly: "A little more and I'd have pummeled him to death."

"Well, neighbor, you're a hot-headed fellow, I must say."

"I'm not hot-headed, but I talk justly, and I think things over. Just let that red-faced fellow look out for me. I'll complain of him to the superintendent yet. He'll see."

And he actually did complain.

One day the superintendent arrived to inspect the line. Some important personages from St. Petersburg were to pass over it, and the inspection was made so that everything might be put in order before their passage. Ballast was sprinkled along and leveled down, the sleepers were examined, bolts screwed up, and posts planted. Semyon toiled for a whole week; he put everything in order, and patched his cabin, and cleaned it, and polished up his brass badge with brick until it shone. Vasily worked likewise. The superintendent arrived. He went up to Semyon's signal box; out sprang Semyon, and made his report in military fashion. Everything was in order.

"Have you been here long?" asked the official.

"Since the second of May, your excellency."

"Good. And who is in number one hundred and sixty-four?"

The inspector—who was traveling with him—replied:

"Vasily Spiridoff."

"Spiridoff—Spiridoff—ah, that's the very man who was sent to us for a reprimand last year?"

"The same, sir."

"Very well, we'll take a look at Vasily Spiridoff. Proceed."

Semyon gazed after them, and thought:

"They'll have a rare time with that neighbor of mine!"

A couple of hours afterward he set out on his rounds. He perceived some one emerging from the hollow by the roadbed, and he thought he saw something white on the person's head. Semyon began to gaze intently. It was Vasily; in his hand was a staff, on his shoulder a little bundle, and his cheek was bound up with a kerchief.

"Whither away, neighbor?" shouted Semyon.

Vasily approached very close; he looked quite affrighted; his face was as white as chalk, and his eyes were wild. He began to speak, but his voice broke.

"To town," said he, "to Moscow—to the management."

"To the management! What an idea! You're going to make some complaint, of course? Drop it, Vasily Spiridoff—overlook it."

"No, brother, I won't overlook it. It's too late to overlook it. You see, he has struck me in the face; he has brought blood. I'll never forget it as long as I live. I don't leave it in this way."

Semyon seized him by the hand.

"Let it go, Spiridoff! I'm talking seriously to you, you had better not do it."

"Better not, indeed! I know myself that it's better left undone. I shall not be doing the best thing for myself, but one must stand up for the right, brother."

"But tell me, pray, how it all came about."

"Well, it came about thus: 'He looked everything over, and came into the signal box. I knew that he would question me strictly, and I had got it all in order. He was on the point of going out when I made my complaint. He began to shout instantly. 'Here,' says he, 'comes the governmental inspection, and you're trying to make complaints about your garden! Here are privy councilors coming,' says he, 'and you are thrusting yourself on them because of your cabbages!' I couldn't stand it, and I said a word that wasn't so very bad, but which struck him as insulting in some way. Then he gave it to me, and I stood up for myself just as I ought to do. They went off, I came to my senses, washed my face, and set out."

"And how about your guardhouse?"

"My wife remains behind. She won't neglect things."

Vasily rose and prepared to set out.

"Farewell, Ivanoff. I don't know whether I shall get any justice."

"Are you going on foot?"

"I'll get permission at the station to go in the freight train; I shall be in Moscow to-morrow."

The neighbors took leave of each other. Vasily went off, and for a long time nothing was heard of him. His wife did his work, and slept neither day nor night; she was quite worn out waiting for her husband. On the fourth day Semyon saw her; her face was swollen with weeping—her eyes were red.

"Has your husband returned?" he asked.

The woman shook her head in the negative, said nothing, and went away in the direction of her house.

Semyon had proceeded for quite a distance, and it

seemed to him that he heard a sound, as though iron were grating against iron. Semyon augmented his pace. There were no repairs going on at that time in his district.

"What is the meaning of this?" he said to himself.

He came out at the edge of the forest; before him rose the railway embankment; above, on the line, a man was crouching down, and busying himself about something. Semyon quietly began to ascend toward him; he thought some one had come to steal the bolts. As he gazed, the man rose to his feet; in his hands he held a crowbar—he had displaced one rail so that it curved to one side. All grew dark before Semyon's eyes; he tried to cry out and couldn't. He beheld Vasily, crowbar in hand, rushing headlong down the other side of the embankment.

"Vasily Spiridoff, come back! Give me your crowbar; we will set the rail to rights. No one will know. Turn back; save your soul from sin!"

Vasily did not return, but plunged into the forest.

Semyon stood by the open rails. The train which was due was not a freight but a passenger train. And there was no way of stopping it; he had no flag. The rail could not be put back in place. He must run; he must certainly run to his signal box for some implements.

Semyon ran panting in the direction of his hut. He ran, and it seemed as though every moment he must fall panting to the earth. He emerged from the forest—only a hundred fathoms remained for him to traverse before he should reach his signal box. Six o'clock, and at two minutes past six the train would arrive. Semyon could see the scene before him; the left wheel of the locomotive catches on the broken rail; it trembles, keels over, tears up the sleepers—tears them into splinters; and then leaves the embankment, in wild curves, and rolls down fifty feet, and the third-class carriages are crowded with people, among them little children. At the present moment they are all sitting at ease foreseeing nothing.

"No; I cannot run to the guard box and return in time," said he to himself.

Semyon did not run to the guard box, but turned back and ran more swiftly than before. He fancies that the train is already approaching. He hears the whistle in the distance; he hears the rails begin to hum quietly and regularly. He has no strength to run farther; he has halted a little over a hundred yards from the fatal spot; and then an idea fairly dazzled him. He pulled off his cap, drew from it his cotton handkerchief; from his boot leg he plucked his knife, and then he crossed himself. He dashed the knife into his left hand; out spurted the blood, he dipped his handkerchief in it, straightened it out, spread it wide, fastened it to a stick, and thus exhibited his red flag.

He stands and waves his flag, for the train is already in sight. The engineer does not see him. He is drawing near, and a heavy train cannot be stopped in the space of one hundred yards.

But the blood still gushes out. Semyon presses the wound to his side and tries to close it, but the blood will not cease to flow. Evidently he has wounded his hand deeply. His head begins to swim; black specks begin to float before his eyes; then all grows dark; the sound of a bell is ringing in his ears. He no longer sees the train, nor hears the sound of it; but one thought possesses his brain:

"I shall not be able to stand—I shall drop the flag—the train will pass over me——"

All was black before his eyes, his mind was a waste, and he dropped the flag.

But the bloodstained handkerchief did not fall to the earth; a hand seized it, and raised it on high before the oncoming train. The engineer caught sight of it, closed the valve, and reversed the engine.

The train came to a halt.

The people leaped from the carriages, and assembled in a crowd. They beheld a man lying senseless and all covered with blood; another man was standing before him, holding a bloody rag fastened to a stick.

It was Vasily who glanced round, then dropped his head.

"Hang me!" said he. "I displaced the rail."

FLOATING WAGON BRIDGE.

Lake Chemong, in Ontario, Canada, is crossed by a floating wagon bridge a mile long. Its narrow, double-planked roadway does not rest on pontoons, but is supported by a floating framework of logs, anchored with stones at short intervals. Although the bridge was built nearly twenty years ago, it is still in service.

BATTLES FOLLOWED BY RAIN.

A great many people are of the opinion that battles are generally followed by rain. It may surprise them, therefore, to be told that a distinguished writer in *Science* proves that out of the 2,200 battles of the American Civil War, only 158 were followed by any rain at all, and that, often, was little more than a shower.

WHERE WOMEN WEAR "PANTS."

The arctic explorers and whalers always touch Greenland before they make their dashes farther north, with the result that the native Greenlanders of these days have a pretty good taste of civilization.

These natives are Eskimos, or half-breeds. In return for furs and fish they sell to their visitors and for services they render, they get much cheap finery, and often utility articles, such as cooking utensils, clothing, stoves, furniture, and—whisky.

The general result is that the Greenland people dress different from the more remote Eskimos.

Trousers are common to both sexes and the forms of headdress are practically the same. The men of south Greenland wear a garment called a timiak, made of birdskins, the feathers being turned inward. This timiak has a hood, which is drawn over the head in the open air. Another garment, called anorak, a sort of vest, made of cotton, is worn over the timiak. The trousers are made of sealskin, and the same material is employed for the footgear, which serves the double purpose of sock and shoe. The combination is called kamils. These consist of an inner sock, with the fur turned inward, and an outside shoe, made of hairless, watertight hide. Into the fur interior the naked foot is put.

The women also of south Greenland wear a jacket made of birdskin, but it differs from the men's garment in that it has no hood. Instead of the hood there is a high collar of black fox fur.

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Automobiling Events in 1913.

With the Vanderbilt Cup and Grand Prize races passed by for 1913, the year's record in automobile racing is the poorest in a decade. Only one road-race record of consequence was lowered, when Gil Anderson, in a Stutz car, won the Elgin National Trophy contest, driving the 302 miles in 4 hours 13 minutes and 38 seconds, or at the rate of 71½ miles an hour.

The Indianapolis Speedway contest, won by Jules Goux in a Peugeot car, was run in much slower time than in 1912, although the entries in this event keep up to the mark.

The West in the last year has kept up its interest in road racing and in track contests. Louis Disbrow, by his long list of victories in track contests with his Simplex machine, seems entitled to rank at the head of track drivers, while Earl Cooper, the Stutz driver, leads in the number of important road races run.

At this time it seems probable that the next Vanderbilt Cup and Grand Prize races will be run over the Santa Monica course. Negotiations to this end have been opened by Western promoters, and the Motor Cups Holding Association, which controls the events, is giving the proposal serious consideration.

Boxing Pays New York State.

In filing the annual report with the new legislature, at Albany, N. Y., the State Athletic Commission will show that since the boxing law went into effect in August, 1911, about $110,000 has been paid into the State comptroller's office, this money being the amount of the 5-per-cent tax on the gross receipts of all licensed clubs operating under the statute. There has been a falling off in receipts during the last year, due probably to the poor quality of many so-called star bouts.

Drunkard Has Charmed Life?

John Dordent, of Los Angeles, Cal., boasts that nothing can kill him. The surgeons in the Receiving Hospital believe him. Throughout a day, by his own confession, he rejuvenated an intoxication of long standing and pressed it to the breaking point, trying, as he says, "to drink all the booze in the city."

He retired in his room, very weary, too tired to turn off the gas. So he blew it out. All night he slept in the fumes of the gas, breathing them into the depths of his lungs.

At noon the servants detected the odor of gas, and had Dordent taken to the hospital. He rapidly recovered, and walked out, feeling quite pert, he said.

Farmer is Guest of City Sharpers.

Much has been said and written about farmers who become "easy marks" for city sharpers. Little is heard of sharpers being "trimmed" by their intended victims, for the farmers are not inclined to be boastful, and the crooks could not be expected to say anything. Sherman W. Biederbeck is a farmer who has met city swindlers and has made merry at their expense. He has gone back to Havelock County, Iowa, after having had the time of his life during a week in Chicago as the guest of a pair of sharpers, who let him win money at races, and provided all comforts.

Biederbeck brought a flock of sheep to the Chicago stockyards and was paid $1,500. He sent $1,400 of the money home, reserving $100 for a sight-seeing tour of the city. Naturally, he met another "farmer," who gave the name of Wilson, bent on a similar mission. They went to Jackson Park, and were strolling on the beach, when Biederbeck's new friend gave a cry of glad surprise, and pointed to a richly clad man walking some distance away.

"I know that man," he exclaimed. "He's the smartest bookmaker in Kansas City. He is wanted by the police. Here's where we make our pile."

Together they confronted the stranger.

Reluctantly the latter admitted his identity, and promised anything if they would refrain from turning him over to the police.

Yes, he had some "sure things" on the races. He took the pair to the German Building, which he said was the "betting exchange." They waited while he went in and bet $2 for them. He returned and handed each a $5 bill.

"You won," he said. They made several more bets. They always won.

"Let's make a killing," suggested "Farmer" Wilson.

They gave their checks, each for $5,000, and the "bookmaker" went in to bet it on "Doctor Kendall." Soon he rushed out excitedly and announced they had won.

"You'll have to put up some money to back up your checks," he said, "then you can collect the fifteen thousand dollars you have won."

Biederbeck wired home for $1,400. In the meantime he was the guest of "Farmer" Wilson.

Somehow the police were informed, and arrested all hands before the $1,400 had arrived. The authorities say the "bookmaker" is George Williams, known as "Alabama Kid," and that he has served several terms for burglary.

Grain Shipment Near Record.

The amount of grain passing through this port for the season just closed came near to record figures. The total was 192,000,000 bushels, an increase of 25,000,000 over last year. The previous high record was 221,000,000 bushels in 1898. Of this year's total 22,000,000 was Canadian trade.

Billiard Events in 1913.

Prominent in the billiard events of the year was the championship tournament of the National Association of Amateur Billiard Players, held at the Union League, Philadelphia. The attendances filled the large banquet hall of the Union League, and hundreds who sought admission were necessarily excluded. For the first time in the history of the league, ladies were admitted to the banquet hall. As a result, the attendances on "ladies' nights" were the most brilliant that ever witnessed billiard contests. The ladies who were admitted, as President William T. Tilden said, represented "the best in Philadelphia," and the male contingent was of corresponding quality.

Joseph Mayer, of Philadelphia, went through the tour-

nament without a defeat, and won the championship. Charles F. Conklin, of Chicago, was second; Edward W. Gardner, of Montclair, N. J., third, and Percy Collins, of Chicago, fourth. The other contestants were J. E. Cope Morton, of Philadelphia; Wilkie C. Dunniway, of Portland, Ore., and Doctor W. E. Uffenheimer, of Philadelphia.

Classes B and C in balk-line and a pocket-billiard tournament under the auspices of the National Association were held in New York. Hal E. Coleman was returned the winner in class B, Clyde B. Terry in class C, and J. H. Shoemaker became the pocket champion.

In class C tournament for this winter Clyde B. Terry and Francis S. Appleby tied for first prize, the decision of which was deferred indefinitely on account of the death of Mr. Appleby's grandfather. E. T. Appleby and Francis S. Appleby both made new records for the class. The former scored a run of 65, while Francis made an average of 8.33.

William F. Hoppe is again dominant in professional billiards. He not only retained the 18.2 balk-line championship by defeating, in challenge matches, George Sutton, of Chicago; Koji Yamada, the Japanese expert, and Calvin Demarest, of Chicago, but March 19, at Pittsburgh, recovered from Orlando Morningstar the 18.1 championship, for which he has not since been challenged. Alfredo de Oro holds the three-cushion carom championship. He won it at San Francisco May 27, 28, and 29 from John W. Horgan, and in New York November 4, 5, and 6 successfully defended it against Joseph Carney, of San Francisco. He is, however, no longer pocket champion. "Bennie" Allen, of Kansas City, took that title from him in a match decided in New York October 1, 2, and 3. Allen, who was challenged by Charles Weston, defeated that player at Kansas City December 3, 4, and 5.

Duck Hunter Has Fired Over Two Tons of Lead.

Commodore William Clark Sterling, of Monroe, Mich., has just celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his duck shooting in the Monroe marshes. He has not missed a season in the half century. When a boy he shot for the markets for several years, killing an average of 1,000 birds each season. He estimates that his yearly average is 400 ducks, and estimating an average of three shots to each duck killed, including misses and shots fired to finish cripples, makes 60,000 charges fired by him during the fifty years. Figuring one and one-quarter ounces of shot to the charge, he has scattered over the Monroe marshes 75,000 ounces, or two tons and 687 pounds of shot.

Sterling now helps to improve the game laws.

Arms Can't "Talk"; Wins $500.

Upon allegations that an injury received in a fall from a street car interfered with her conversational powers, Mrs. Mary Lanter obtained damages of $500 in her suit against a street-railway company, at Kansas City, Mo. Mrs. Lanter is a deaf mute. She contended that injuries to her arms impeded her in her efforts at transmitting words in the sign language.

Football "Form" Upset in 1913.

Football was notable in 1913 for the numerous upsets in form. Never before has there been a season when experts had their predictions so rudely shattered. Results proved that the margin between the minor and major college on the gridiron is becoming narrower all the time, and a forecast might be hazarded that it will not be many years before the sport of the football field will be just as much of an open thing as is the sport of the diamond. The outstanding figure of the year was Charles E. Brickley, the Harvard half back, who made all the points for his college in the games against Princeton and Yale. Another prominent figure was Spiegel, of Washington and Jefferson, who tallied 127 points for his team by his individual efforts.

The first shock to followers of football came early in the year when Colgate defeated Yale rather easily. Then came Princeton's great fight against the formidable Harvard machine, followed by the Elis playing the Tigers to a standstill. Another result that set the experts by the ears was the downfall of the Dartmouth team, which gave promise of being rated as the best team in the East. The Carlisle Indians, who had none too remarkable a record up to the time of that meeting, accomplished the unexpected.

The two last games of the season, though, furnished the most astonishing upsets of all. Cornell's amazing triumph over Pennsylvania for the first time in many years was sensation enough, but when the Army trounced the Navy those who figured themselves competent to judge the prowess of football teams threw up their hands in despair.

That Army-Navy game was a triumph for open football, and it is probable that there will be a good deal more of this seen in the next season than was on tap in the past.

Credit is given to Notre Dame University for showing the possibilities of this in the East when the Indiana eleven trounced the Cadets.

Just how the East stands against the West is a moot question. It is certain, though, that the balance was all in favor of the teams beyond the Alleghanies. While the best teams of the East were not met by Westerners, ones that were fairly representative of Eastern football played Western teams, and in every case the Easterners were vanquished.

There was little question about Harvard being the champion of the East. Chicago won the Conference championship, but there were elevens outside that circle which had mighty good reasons to believe they could beat Stagg's team. More interest than ever was shown in football, and at the Harvard-Yale and Army-Navy games record crowds watched the sport.

Martyrs of the Air in 1913.

One of the saddest tragedies in the history of the year is the increased number of aviators who have sacrificed their lives in trying to perfect the science of air navigation. In 1908 1 was killed, in 1909 4, in 1910 32, in 1911 99, in 1912 150, and in 1913 200, besides 38 who were badly injured, making the total number of deaths since air flying was attempted 497.

Chew Up Three Ships Every Year in United States.

"The $30,000,000 spent yearly in the United States for chewing gum would pay for three dreadnaughts, and the $2,000,000,000 contributed to John Barleycorn would pay for 200 battleships."

Hudson Maxim suggested this novel means of supplying a greater navy in an address delivered at the "Peace" services in the New York Theater. The only way to prevent

war, Maxim declared, was to be ready for it. He declared that if Spain and the United States had been a little better prepared there would have been no war in 1898. Modern weapons contributed to peace, he said.

Walk 2,000 Miles Across Ice.

Captain Louis Lane, of the power schooner *Polar Bear*, which is frozen in the Arctic Ocean, near Flaxman Island, arrived at Seattle, Wash., recently, from Valdez by steamship, accompanied by Eben Draper, of Boston, Mass.; Dunbar Lockwood, also of Boston, and Will T. Hudson. The men had walked from the arctic shore to Circle City, Fairbanks, and Valdez, a distance of 2,000 miles.

George Silsby and John Heard, sportsmen, of Boston, and Samuel Mixter, W. Sprague Brooks, and Joseph Dixon, scientific collectors, remained on the vessel.

Captain R. D. Pederson, commander of the schooner *Elvira*, which was crushed by the arctic ice, and who walked from the Arctic Ocean to Valdez, also arrived from the North.

Ad Wolgast Won't Come Back.

Ad Wolgast can no longer claim the 133-pound fighting championship that he once held. The famous Dutchman took a punching from Charlie White, the Chicago boy, through ten rounds of fierce milling in Hippodrome Arena, at Milwaukee, Wis., recently. Wolgast was not the Wolgast of old. He was good, but not good enough. At the conclusion he was weary and sick. He looked disgusted with himself as he went to his corner, and his seconds wiped his bleeding mouth. Wolgast won't come back. He is through as a champion, but there's many a lightweight he still can lick.

The battle was so fierce it figuratively stood the 4,000 folks present on their heads. It was the finest combat of the season in this boxing town.

Reds' Manager Sees Pennant.

"I'll make the Reds a pennant contender right from the start, and if we don't win the banner next season, we will put up a fight for it. I am going to put the Reds into first division, at least."

So spoke Charley Herzog. The newly made manager of the Cincinnati ball club is the most enthusiastic leader that ever took hold of the reins. Charley is a brainy player and a fighter. He is only 28 years of age. He will probably manage the Reds as long as he desires. The local management is anxious to do away with the annual change of managers, and it is because of this that Herzog will be given plenty of chance to prove his worth.

Foot Amputated by Hot Wire.

A length of copper wire, white-hot, and reduced to a diameter of one-sixty-fourth of an inch, was being whirled from the die of a reducing machine in the mill of the National Conduit & Cable Co., at Hastings, N. Y., when George Mack, an operator, noticed that the big loop had become tangled. He stepped within the loop to give the glowing wire a turn with his tongs when it wrapped itself about his ankles. His foot was completely severed.

Goes Insane on Operations.

Jacob Bisdorf is missing from his home, at Wabash, Ind., and members of his family fear that during a temporary fit of insanity he has gone to some city where he has induced surgeons to operate on him. A number of years ago Bisdorf underwent an operation at Philadelphia, Pa., and many times during the past six months he has insisted on again entering a hospital, despite the fact that physicians declare that he is perfect physically. Recently he attempted to have surgeons operate on him at a Wabash hospital, and failing in this his family believes he has now gone elsewhere.

United States Got Few Rowing Laurels in 1913.

Rowing is a sport in which no great amount of laurels came to this country in the last year. R. R. Dibble, of the Don Rowing Club, Toronto, left all the rest in his wake at the national championships held on the Charles River in the senior sculls. The Dons also won the doubles. The intermediate eight of the Duluth Boat Club, of Duluth, Wis., however, upheld the honor of this country, pulling the sweeps and won that championship, beating their own senior combination.

In intercollegiate rowing Syracuse furnished a surprise by winning the championship at Poughkeepsie. This race was a noteworthy one in that Syracuse was figured to have only an outside chance. Cornell and Columbia, the favorites, however, killed each other off in the early stretches, with the result that Syracuse slid into first place in a very thrilling finish. Harvard again won in a very one-sided race with Yale, at New London. The Blue once more tried to use the English stroke, and the fallacy of this policy as applied to American oarsmen was demonstrated so strongly that the whole system at Yale has since been changed. Princeton, a newcomer in college aquatic circles, gave a good account of itself, and closed the season with a triumph over Yale.

Gives Wilson Hickory Stick.

A hickory walking stick carried by Andrew Jackson when he was elected president was sent by parcel post to President Wilson as a Christmas present from Levi W. Ludlum, of Wichita, Kan. Andrew Jackson gave the stick to Barney Fox, his neighbor, in Tennessee. Later Fox gave it to Ludlum with the understanding that when Ludlum got too old to "go out much" he should present it to a Democratic president.

Baseball Honors of 1913.

For the fourth consecutive year the American League triumphed over the National League in the world's series, the recognized classic of baseball, the Philadelphia Athletics defeating the New York Giants and closing the season of 1913, which takes rank as one of the most successful in the history of the national game. Few surprises marked the baseball year, as the Athletics and the Giants played true to form and finished in the positions that a majority conceded would be theirs before the season was half over.

Of the few form reversals that characterized the season the most signal were the failure of the Pittsburgh club to finish better than fourth, when early predictions indicated that it would be a strong contender for the National League pennant, and the fall of the Boston American League Club, winner of the 1912 world's series, which never was a factor in the 1913 race.

Individual honors in both leagues went to four recognized stars. "Ty" Cobb, of Detroit, again led the American League in batting, with an average of .390 in 122 games, and "Jake" Daubert, of Brooklyn, was the National

League's best batsman, having a mark of .350 in 139 games. Walter Johnson, of Washington, led the American League pitchers, allowing an average of 1.09 earned runs a game in forty-seven games. "Christy" Mathewson, veteran of the Giants, was the leading pitcher of the National League, participating in forty games, and permitting an average of 2.06 runs a game.

Boy Gets Year in Jail for Theft of Eleven Cents.

Michael Lentz, 18 years old, who has been in jail two months, was sentenced to serve one year in the Luzerne County, Pa., jail because he was convicted of stealing 11 cents.

Lentz was arrested shortly after John Saham, his boarding boss, missed 11 cents from his pocketbook. A charge of larceny was preferred, and Lentz was tried and convicted.

Because the boy had served eighty days awaiting trial, it was thought that the court would parole him, but Judge P. A. O'Boyle gave him a year's sentence, besides a fine of $25.

Bank is Glad Bandits Came.

The Bank of Ottawa, at Vancouver, B. C., is $10 richer as a result of an attempted bank robbery by two armed bandits.

Shortly after the Robson Street branch of the bank opened, two young men presented themselves at the teller's window, and asked for change for a $10 bill. As the teller reached for his cash, the men drew revolvers and commenced shooting. The teller dropped behind the counter until business men in the neighborhood, hearing the reports, rushed in and frightened the would-be robbers away. They had failed to reach the bills on the counter, and in their haste they left their working capital.

Home for Poor Family Built in Seven Hours.

With lumber, nails, fixtures, and other materials donated by business men, thirty-one carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, and electricians built in seven hours a house for the destitute Van Meter family, consisting of mother and five children.

It was a Christmas present to the family, which has been living in a wretched tent hovel for months.

The house is wired for electricity, piped for gas, contains complete plumbing fixtures and connections with sewer and water mains.

Our New Swimming Champion.

When speaking of swimmers one always calls to mind Charles M. Daniels, of the New York A. C., who retired at the zenith of his career. Few thought that he would be out of competition long before another would spring up to be just as sensational a maker of records as he was in his palmy days. Such has been the case, however, and in Duke Kananamoku, of Honolulu, America has just as great a swimmer as ever Daniels was. Whether he is Daniels' superior is a question, but he certainly is fast, putting into the discard most of the marks made by the New York A. C. man. Last season he made new figures all the way from fifty yards up to a quarter of a mile, and evidently is far from his limit yet.

"Bud" Goodwin, one of the veterans, proved that he is still a star at the distance events, and set up a couple of records in addition to being a consistent winner. Other swimmers who did a lot to keep up the prestige of American swimming were Perry McGillivray, of the Illinois A. C., and A. C. Raithel, of the same club.

Negro Champion Breaks Arm.

Jack Johnson, the heavyweight champion, and "Battling" Jim Johnson, another colored pugilist, of Galveston, Texas, met in a ten-round contest, in Paris, France, recently, which ended in a draw. The spectators loudly protested throughout that the men were not fighting, and demanded their money back. Many of them left the hall. The organizers of the fight explained the fiasco by asserting that Jack Johnson's left arm was broken in the third round.

Few Boxing Developments in 1913.

Little of note was developed during the year in the prize ring. The "white hope," after another twelvemonth, seems as difficult of finding as was the Golden Fleece of mythological times. The feature that stood out in most surprising style was the killing of Luther McCarty at Calgary, Canada, by Arthur Pelky in the first round of their bout. The latter was considered only a mediocre heavyweight, while McCarty, through his victory over "Al" Palzer, was considered the white heavyweight champion. Palzer, up to the time of his defeat, was thought to have a great future, but he has gone from bad to worse, and is entirely eliminated. This time last year he and McCarty stood out among the heavyweights. A new star has arisen in the person of "Gunboat" Smith. He has come along remarkably, and victories over Palzer, "Bombardier" Wells, the English champion, and "Sam" Langford, the Boston "dreadnaught," in addition to numerous other aspirants for the title, have put him right at the top of the heap. To be sure, "Jack" Johnson has not been defeated, but from all accounts of his present condition it is simply because he has not met a worthy opponent.

"Willie" Ritchie has held his title of lightweight champion, as has "Johnny" Kilbane, in the feather class, but they are more business men than fighters, as was the case in the olden days, and few enthusiasts consider them very remarkable title holders. The welter and middleweight classes are just as unsettled as they were a year ago. If "Packey" McFarland would fight as a welter, his natural class, undoubtedly he would be in a class by himself, but he continues to insist on meeting lightweights, so little praise can be given to him.

As far as the bantams are concerned, "Johnny" Coulon is still considered to be the leader, but he has refused to meet the best of his weight, and in the opinion of many the first time he encounters a really worthy opponent he will be relegated to the has-been class.

That America has nothing to fear from the newly awakened interest in boxing abroad was proven by the victories of Americans in the few international bouts that were staged during the year.

Yachting Events in 1913.

The *Josephine*, Mr. Addison G. Hanan's successful class P sloop.

The *Ankle Deep*, Count Casimir S. Mankowski's American champion high-speed motor boat.

The *Dream*, Commodore Charles L. Lagen's motor boat, winner of the Bermuda race.

In selecting American champions for 1913 in yachting

and motor boating it is necessary to eliminate many restricted classes from consideration, although each and every class has its champion. To say that one particular yacht is the all-round champion would be like naming one runner as the best, whereas the honors for sprinting and in distance events fall to entirely different persons.

However, on general performance outside of a one-design class, Mr. Addison G. Hanan's new class P sloop, the *Josephine*, has attracted the greatest amount of attention by her uniformly good showing and almost continuous wins.

Mr. Ralph N. Ellis' N. Y. Y. C. fifty-footer, the *Iroquois II.*, had a shade the better of her rivals in that new and successful class. As the *Elena* was withdrawn from competition in midseason, leaving the *Irolita* practically alone in the class of large racing schooners, no selection is made in that division.

Mr. Johnston de Forest's *Nepsi* easily headed the N. Y. Y. C. "thirties," while in the smaller active classes Mr. A. B. Fry's *Star Faraway*, of the Star class, managed to edge in ahead of her active competitors.

In the sphere of motor boating, Count Casimir S. Mankowski's *Ankle Deep*, winner of the Gold Cup, emblematic of American championship honors, is selected. The *Ankle Deep* was defeated by the *Maple Leaf IV.* in the international races abroad, but that does not interfere with her claim to the American championship.

In long-distance motor-boat racing Commodore Charles L. Lagen's *Dream*, which added another leg to her credit in the race to Bermuda from Philadelphia, is selected for championship honors.

Embezzlements in 1913.

The record of public dishonesty for 1913 keeps nearly even pace with that of 1912, being in round numbers a little over $11,000,000 for each year, as compared with $10,000,000 in 1911 and $25,000,000 in 1910. The actual figures, as far as reported for 1913, are $11,508,131, as compared with $11,482,051 in 1912, distributed as follows:

Banks	$4,904,049
Miscellaneous	1,358,667
Agents	1,135,460
Forgeries	2,484,367
Public officials	1,483,408
Loan associations	102,464
Postal employees	38,776

Banks, as usual, are the heaviest sufferers. In 1908 the money stolen amounted to $5,933,971, and in 1910 it reached $6,263,185. In 1909, 1911, and 1912 it averaged about $3,000,000, but in 1913 it nearly reached the high record of 1908.

The figures cited can only be called approximate. Many peculations are never reported, some are incorrectly reported, and many are settled. Numerous minor defalcations never appear in the news. In seeking for the causes of so much public dishonesty the head of a well-known private detective agency aptly says it is not so much the high cost of living as high living.

Losses by Wars in 1913.

The principal wars of 1913 have been those in the Balkan States, China, and the civil strife in Mexico. The total losses amount to 205,612 killed and wounded, and may be unofficially stated as follows: Balkans, 164,527; Mexico, 22,417; China, 9,279; Tripoli, 1,854; Morocco, 1,649; Philippines, 257; Africa, 96; Arabia, 62; Persia, 50. The total number compares with 322,000 in 1912, 72,000 in 1911, 13,000 in 1910, 68,000 in 1909, and 22,000 in 1908. In the two wars in the Balkans, Bulgaria lost 44,892. Of this number, 30,024 were killed in a war of the Allies with Turkey and 14,868 in the war between Bulgaria and the Servians and Greeks. There were 104,586 Bulgarians wounded in the two wars.

Polo Victories of 1913.

Aided by the stimulus of an international match, there was never a more interesting polo season than that of 1913. Early in the spring there was a gathering of all the players who were figured to have a chance to make the team to uphold the honor of America, for it was thought that the famous "Big Four" would not go into the field. This was just what would have happened, too, if it had not been that Foxhall P. Keene broke his shoulder bone on the eve of the matches, and the team that was originally chosen stood down in favor of the noted quartet that had been successful before. America had a close shave in the second contest, when victory was obtained by the narrowest possible margin of a quarter goal, the result being greatly influenced by a penalty given against his own country by the British referee. For the two games there was a tremendous turnout of sport-loving persons, and those who have seen sporting spectacles for many years did not hesitate to say that the final game was one of the most thrilling spectacles ever seen in this country.

An accident to "Monty" Waterbury brought about a change in the American line-up, and Louis E. Stoddard took his place. He played so well that America feels safer for the future, in view of the fact that Henry Payne Whitney, the captain, insists that he is through as an active participant in matches. Another match is assured in the coming year through the acceptance of a British challenge recently, and the games will be once more staged at Meadow Brook in June.

The annual American senior, junior, and open championships were held at the Point Judith Club, Narragansett Pier, R. I., and a clean sweep was made by teams from the Cooperstown Club. This was the first time such a thing had happened. Meadow Brook had held the senior championship four years in succession. Some of the Cooperstown players, like C. C. Rumsey, Malcolm Stevenson, C. P. Beadleston, and F. S. von Stade, gave promise of developing into good timber for international matches in the future.

Deaths of Prominent Persons in 1913.

The following is a list of persons of worldwide reputation who have passed away during 1913: January 5, Lewis Swift, astronomer, Binghamton, N. Y.; 14, Anton Schatt, one of the pioneers of Wagner's operas, Stuttgart; February 8, John G. Browne, the newsboy painter, New York; 10, Captain Robert F. Scott, antarctic explorer; 17, Joaquin Miller, poet of the Sierras; 23, Francesco Y. Madero, President of Mexico, assassinated; March 18, King George of Greece; 18, Louis Maurice Bontet de Monvell, painter and illustrator, Paris; 31, J. Pierpont Morgan, capitalist; May 10, Laurence Wedgwood, head of the Wedgwood pottery; 20, Henry M. Flagler, capitalist and railroad magnate; 28, Sir John Lubbock, naturalist, London; June 1, Thomas W. Palmer, ex-United States senator, author, and

president of the World's Columbian Exposition; June 2, Alfred Austin, English poet laureate; 10, Mahmoud Shefket Pasha, grand vizier of Turkey; 30, Henri Rochefort, journalist and political agitator, Paris; August 4, George Hitchcock, painter, Paris; 8, David Poppe, 'cellist and composer, Vienna; 13, August Ferdinand Bebel, Socialist leader, Germany; 20, Ernest Olivier, statesman and premier, France; September 11, William J. Gaynor, mayor of New York; 20, Pierre de Conterain (Madame Favre), author, Paris; October 10, Adolphus Busch, brewer, St. Louis, Mo.; November 7, Alfred Russell Wallace, scientist, England; 7, Doctor Charles McBurney, surgeon and "father" of the appendicitis treatment; 17, Mathilde C. Marchesi, singing teacher.

Homicides in 1913.

The number of deaths by personal violence of all kinds in 1913 as reported by telegraph or recorded by newspapers in every State of the Union was 8,992, as compared with 9,152 in 1912, 8,272 in 1911, and 8,975 in 1910. It must be taken into account that this record is not confined to such cases of murder and homicide as result in arrest and conviction, but includes deaths by every form of personal violence. It is impossible, without official records, to make anything but a general classification. The largest number is set down as quarrels, it being impossible under the circumstances to subdivide quarrels under appropriate headings. The various causes generally stated were as follows:

Quarrels	4,752
Unnamed causes	2,756
By highwaymen	344
Jealousy	296
Infanticide	146
Liquor	184
Resisting arrest	134
Insanity	112
Strikes	101
Highwaymen killed	61
Riots	49
Criminal outrage	5

Thirteen persons were killed during the year by Black Hands and six by Highbinders. There were also thirteen cases of double murder, seven of triple murder, two of quadruple murder, and ten of quintuple murder.

Wright's Italian Rival.

The claim to have been the first to devise an automatically stable aëroplane seems likely to be in dispute between Orville Wright and Doctor Robiola, of Turin, Italy. The latter is about to give a public display with a hydro-aëroplane constructed of metal throughout, weighing about a ton, which he says is absolutely uncapsizable and able to travel more than 150 miles an hour.

In this machine, instead of being alongside the pilot, the equilibrators are fixed on the body of the machine. Doctor Robiola's novelty will be piloted by a well-known Italian aviator.

Digs Up Rare Old Coins.

A silver dollar bearing the date 1804, highly prized by numismatists, and understood to be worth $3,500 for collection purposes, was found in New Haven, Conn., recently.

William Sullivan, a workman, excavating on the site of the new ice rink for the Yale hockey team, turned over with his shovel an old jar which rested on a bowlder seven feet below the surface of State Street, near by. Under the bowl was a silver snuffbox made in Nuremberg, green with oxidation. The snuffbox contained a silver dollar, dated 1804, with letters around the edge in place of milling; silver dollar, 1798; three Connecticut copper coins, 1787; Connecticut State bank note for 40 shillings, date 1778; Continental note of 1775 for $3; a watch made in Strassburg in 1731; a deed of property written in Old English, not yet deciphered, of date of 1697; a document dated 1728, with six imprints on it which appear to be imposts by the British government. The hall mark on the snuffbox is of 1740.

Exaggerated reports of the treasure find spread rapidly and scores of persons flocked to the excavation and began stirring up the wet earth. Sullivan, the finder of the snuffbox, had a proposal of marriage from a woman who had heard that he had found $10,000.

A Philadelphia coin collector hurried to New Haven at once, and upon making an examination said the 1804 coin appeared to be genuine. He made a tentative offer of $2,000 for it. The dollar was taken to New York, where tests will be made. Several telegrams were received, making offers for the dollar. One offer from New York was for $1,200.

Ships' Hulls Change Form.

The hull of a ship is subject to considerable changes of form in variable temperature, according to recent experiments by Naval Constructor S. F. Smith, U. S. N. Using the naval colliers for his tests, he found that some of the ships either sagged in the middle or "hogged" (drop at the ends) about one inch for every seven degrees' change of temperature, and that the middle of the ship would move up and down as much as six inches with reference to the ends.

These experiments may throw considerable light upon the causes of the breaking of shafts due to their being thrown out of alignment.

Four Shot from Ambush.

Edward Smith and Floyd Moore, who reside near Washington, Pa., were taking their sweethearts home from a Christmas dance one night recently, driving in a surrey, when they were fired on from ambush. Their assailants, who were concealed in a clump of bushes, used shotguns, and all of the four occupants of the carriage were struck by birdshot. The horses were stung, too, and ran more than a mile before the young men could stop them.

Smith and Moore hint that their assailants were two countryside rivals, who expected to take the girls to the dance, but were "cut out" at the last moment.

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